The
COMMONWEAL

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George Shuster at Hunter

GEORGE N. SHUSTER was installed last week as president of Hunter College of the City of New York. His inauguration followed a year of service as acting president of the college, and a week of impressive academic and civic ceremonies. At the same time that Mr. Shuster took office, the great New York women's college of 10,000 students, the largest in the world, opened its new building, a modern, wonderfully light and beautifully designed "skyscraper campus" in the heart of the city it serves. George Shuster was managing editor of THE COMMONWEAL for almost ten years, until he took leave in 1937 for travel and study and the composition of a book in a disintegrating Europe. THE COMMONWEAL is proud and happy in the work he has taken up now, in an America which can still avert or mitigate some of the disasters coming upon Europe and the world. He saw and analyzed them, abroad and in America and regularly for this magazine. Mr. Shuster has taken a post of eminent leadership in the labor of preserving and building the culture and civilization of America and protecting it from dangers he has helped so much to understand.

A Broad Field

He is fitted to lead in this broad and fundamental work. He has proven clarity of mind, remarkably far-reaching erudition, and inexhaustible energy. The discipline and clearness of his intelligence, his practically limitless capacity for work, and his courage to use his intelligence are all qualities for educational leadership. We do not feel this new field is far separated from this magazine, his old endeavor. We are grateful that President Shuster continues to publish his writings in THE COMMONWEAL, and that he remains a contributing editor and a helpful friend. Very rarely can one go "all out" in enthusiasm for a public action like the appointment of George Shuster. We know in this case that our own personal pleasure and enthusiasm are identified with the good of the young women who go to Hunter and with the good of their families and of the state. He is a Catholic gentleman and scholar who will do New York good by his influence upon it, and will do the Church great good by presenting to the people a high and loyal example of a Christian servant. George Shuster will teach by living, as well as by advocating, his own definition of the "democratic way" at Hunter College: "Those who form its staff must first of all be free men and women—persons of resolution and courtesy, afraid of nothing save subjection to error, pretense and dishonesty."

Roumania and Beyond

ROUMANIA is a country in which an admirably sound peasant population has been subject throughout contemporary history to an aristocracy that was conscious of its lineage, mindless of its duty, and frivolous. As fortunate at Versailles as they had been luckless in the field, the Roumanian governing classes failed to make any serious attempt at creating an integrated society until Carol put aside the playthings of a too persistent youth for the dangerous game of imitating the exterior aspects of fascism. Now someone, whose name is not worth remembering, governs Roumania, while Carol, faithful in his fashion, in Seville, Spain, compares a new exile with previous and more pleasant periods in Paris. His country is subject now to the German invading armies.

The Russian Factor

You cannot move armies without their being seen; you cannot move them without giving your people, and the world, some explanation of why they move. The Germans have explained their entry into Roumania by saying that they have to secure Roumanian oil fields against possible British sabotage. And the German need for grain and oil would be sufficient explanation were it not for

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the fact that everyone, including statesmen, look at maps and, on the map, the German move is toward the Black Sea, toward Constantinople, toward Turkey and Syria and Suez. It is a step in the direction of certain places and it is a threat against certain countries. Unless indeed the Germans content themselves with protecting Roumanian oil they may be soon engaged in a new attempt to realize their old and recurrent dream of expansion toward the East. This German orientalism has always met with Russian opposition, an opposition which was, and must remain inevitable as long as one imperial force faces another in the traditional framework of nationalism. The question is whether or not the German and Russian interests in controlling the Dardanelles, interests which conflict, can be subordinated by both countries to a common and superior interest in founding the new world order. That is the way the Germans will put it. Actually, if Russia is to fit into the new order it will not be on terms of equality. And Russia by its announcement that it was not informed in advance by the Germans concerning their operations in Roumania, nor consulted, states clearly that if an agreement is possible it has not yet been reached. The German independent action also shows the Nazis are not concerned and it is absurd to suppose that Russian acceptance of the inevitable cannot still be imposed by German power. Yet if the Germans advance into Asia they will find not only a Turkish nation determined to resist them, and French Syrian forces which still might be galvanized into action, but they will have exposed their lines of communication. The Russian threat against these lines will remain a serious threat because it springs from a permanent historical policy. It will become more than a threat if the day comes when the Russians are convinced that British sea power and British resistance are unbreakable.

American Help to Finland

THE NEW YORK *TIMES* publishes its own account of the extent and nature of American help to Finland since the close of the Russian war. For minds appalled by the nature of the news from overseas, this story of salvage and neighborliness between nations makes tonic reading. The sources of the aid which has made this postwar interval endurable to the heavily punished little country, which has kept them going and given them hope, are two—the Congressional loan of thirty millions, and the three and one-half millions raised here by private subscription to the Finnish Relief Fund. The larger sum has gone largely into the buying and transportation of supplies which the country could not otherwise have obtained, and which have enabled it to function: lard, grain, dried fruit, peas, soya beans for people and livestock alike; trucks and tractors, factory machinery, spare parts and tools; cotton for the textile mills; chemicals and medical supplies. These purchases, which have already consumed somewhat more than half of the whole appropriation, have been coming into Finland steadily, priming its industrial and agricultural activities and steadying the morale of its people. Relief of a more informal and personal character has been administered to civilians through the Relief Fund. Of the total of six millions subscribed all over the world, the American share has been somewhat more than half, as is said above. About half of that half still remains as an emergency provision against the coming winter. The amount disbursed has gone for shoes, clothes, bedding, utensils, medicine, food—all given out, not by wholesale, but individually, as specific cases required it. Traveling children's clinics and maternity hospitals have eased anguish and cut down mortality, especially among the displaced sections of the population; families have been rehabilitated wherever possible; relief work in all its multifold aspects has gone forward everywhere. Never, perhaps, has two million dollars reached so far, or covered so much. This has been made possible by many things—wise planning, intelligent cooperation from an exceptionally hardy and courageous people, and a relief staff devoted in character and largely volunteer in personnel. This is a quiet effort, not much advertised, of which we may all be proud.

A Heartening Story

Industrial Relations and National Defense

PERIODS of intense American industrial expansion have been accompanied in recent times by major labor disputes. After months of comparative quiet, signs of growing tension in defense industries are at hand. The California airplane industry, which is one one-fifth organized, is growing so rapidly that the companies are operating with pay differentials sometimes at the very same bench. Both CIO and AFL are trying to organize the men. Shipbuilders such as Bethlehem Steel and New York Shipbuilding are threatened by strikes at the very moment their plants are strained to capacity. Truckmen in New York and vicinity have been striking for a week's vacation with pay. In all these cases the pressure for keeping full steam up is tremendous. The activity of Sidney Hillman on the defense coordinating commission and the recent Supreme Court decisions upholding the National Labor Relations Board on several important cases are indications that the workers are not being wholly neglected. But the growing tension that accompanies the rapid expansion of important American industries shows that labor is not adequately represented. The workers must be taken more and

Greater Rôle for Labor

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more into the national defense councils. Then army and civilians, workers and employers can work out together an efficient program which will not require disproportionate sacrifices from any component of the whole. Labor should have more say in the administration of the defense program.

Your Local Board

AS FAR as we could see and as far as we experienced, R-Day was utterly undramatic. We went back down the block to the same school where everyone for ten days had been registering to vote, and went up to the same desk to tell over again name, address, birthplace, etc. (11 points of information). Either there wasn't going to be a crowd, or for once we got somewhere before the crowd did. No one had to wait at all, and the volunteer women helpers were literate and the cards were filled out in a moment. The number of volunteer assistants around the basketball court, nearly all female, was gruesomely great: there were no kisses for the draftees, but a threatening kindliness. Still, in spite of the immense publicity in the papers, over the air and on printed notices, it would have taken a strong imagination to be impressed through Registration with the importance of October 16 in the lives of those of us who signed up for selected service or with its importance in the life of the country.

R-Day

There was no alarm in our neighborhood, personal or general. Color stories in the press predicting organized mourning and parades, policemen stationed and ready to crack down on troublemakers and other logical expectations must have referred to very distant districts. We were lambs. Like most things, the draft is divided up into short, unimportant-seeming steps: registration, listing of serial numbers, listing of order numbers, questionnaires, classification, physical examination, notice of decision as to physical qualifications, order to report for induction. The steps will come gradually; R-Day did not enforce comprehension of the state of the world or of the country or of ourselves. It was dull but not troublesome.

After we got our card it was still early and we walked over to the Automat for breakfast. It was a good breakfast, for a quarter, and there was no extra charge for a second butter on the wheatcakes. At the tables that were filled up around the time we came in, some customers were reading the paper, but a good sprinkling were reading "Form 5—Bulletin of Information for Persons Registered—1940." More than one, perhaps, drank a sip of coffee at one of these places in the bulletin: "Under the law it is now your duty to keep yourself informed as to any action concerning you which your local board may take. . . . If a person dependent upon you for support should die, marry, or become self-supporting, tell your local board. If you lose your job or change your work, tell your local board. . . . Keep in touch with your local board office and learn from your local board. . . . Remember, it is your duty to learn what your local board is doing about you." On the subway going down to work a few of the passengers had "Form 5" stuck in a pocket or held in the same hand they used for hanging onto the strap, obviously about to be lost. *"Keep this booklet—Read it carefully."* And Remember! *"It is important that you keep your registration certificate with you at all times."* Being a citizen is taking up a lot of time this fall. Maybe we will know ourselves, citizens, step by step.

America's New Community Sports Program

ANOTHER slant on the lethargic state of our democracy comes in the announcement of a conference to be called at the White House right after election day to set up a national health program. The spectacle of thousands of citizens hiking in every possible direction in oddly assorted outfits, of playing fields bursting with young and old, men and women hard at play, should have its rather pleasing aspects. Think of the prospect of a neighborhood game of soccer or soft ball twice a week! Wholesale community outdoor sports might be great fun. And if, as planned, it is coupled with physical examinations, the results should be highly beneficial. Why, however, does there have to be a nation-wide defense drive to bring about a good such as this? Are not the health and fitness of every citizen important *per se* regardless of military considerations? Why haven't there been more voluntary community sport programs up to now? Long before the war the dictators utilized recreational and health programs to build up the physique of their citizenry and the sense of social solidarity as well. In the long run democracies such as ours cannot withstand the pressure of totalitarian success unless they keep up with the dictators in the facilities afforded the citizen. Such facilities are best provided by local initiative. Local community approaches to a wide range of problems—political, educational, social and economic and recreational—will enable American democracy once again to develop the dynamism it needs to face up to a hostile world. One of the most appealing aspects of a campaign to make every American brim over with health is the likelihood that the people will rediscover the zest of doing things together. The conquest of good health would then lead to important social conquests in other fields. Some of the national slogans suggested by oarsman John B. Kelly, author of the program, have their points; our favorite is, "Don't Be a Softy."

A Nation in the Pink

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Letter from France

A personalist leader, editor of *Esprit,* sends this message to America from France.

By **Emmanuel Mounier***

WHAT seems important for me to explain to our American friends who are troubled by the somewhat brusque turbulence of European events is not their outward tumult but their inner meaning. Whatever yesterday's accidents or tomorrow's surprises, a certain historic process has unfolded. It would not have been altered by better luck in our military operations. The unforeseen character of the future will not be able to modify certain basic notes of that character. We must, first of all, gain a clear grasp of this historic reality if we wish to have, in the cataclysm upon which the world has entered, a directing star, and for our personal conduct, a focus for resistance.

The first step to take is to place one's self on the scale of vision of the man who at this moment has taken the initiative in the history of Europe. Herr Hitler on several occasions has declared that he envisions his policies on the scale of a thousand years. The "realists" smile. But on reflection this perspective would seem instead a bit narrow. In a thousand years' time, from the third to the thirteenth century, the Roman Empire did not succeed in disappearing altogether from the horizon of the peoples, and at the end of a thousand years how far along was the Christianization of Europe? I am well aware that things move more rapidly today. At least in what relates to machines and techniques. But as for that which relates to that growth of the soul of the world, which M. Bergson so justly says is necessary in order to supply the vacancies in a physical structure which has expanded out of proportion—as for that growth, I do not think that its acceleration changes greatly from year to year. Therefore it is not unreasonable to look back several centuries for the origins of the European crisis, and to envision for several centuries to come the direction that must be given to this world in turmoil.

To say that France did not suffer a military defeat, exactly, if military defeats ever exist in a pure state, is not meant to take away anything from the character of the German army and the brilliant conduct of its campaign. It might seem astonishing that the "finest infantry in the world" was so quickly crushed; but under the torrent of a superiority of matériel its military qualities did not even have time to be put to the test. The fact is that our defeat is a defeat for France rather than for the French army; at least for a certain France, and behind her a certain form of Western civilization. At this point that defeat begins to concern the whole world.

Military causes

Even the military causes for our misfortune bear the mark of that fatal languor which brought a nation—with a striking lack of regard for the historical movement which impelled it—to the very edge of the abyss.

Poverty in matériel? But what are we to think of a political personnel which continue a policy of the Richelieu type, of active presence in Europe, and of military guarantees of countries far from our own frontiers, a personnel which at the same time left our military equipment in such an impoverished state that even well-informed Frenchmen would not have dared to imagine it?

Lack of fight? It is a fact that we all observed at first hand that the French people did not enter this war wholeheartedly and with a real desire to win. The Frenchman as a citizen is interested in ideology; but the French infantryman is a peasant. He really understands only when his land is threatened. A solid wisdom that, but it cannot be denied that since the crusades and Napoleon it has grown somewhat narrow. The fact remains, whether we attribute it to common sense or to the achievement of propaganda, that the French peasants saw in Hitler a new edition of the "Prussian," the man their fathers and grandfathers knew. And since the "Prussian" for once said he did not wish their fields and spoke of giving battle on the other side of the world, they could not see why they should be disturbed from their daily tasks.

In May the war took on a meaning for them

*A word about this article. Mounier knows that in this country there are many of us who have read his "Personalist Manifesto" and who have followed his thought in *Esprit,* the magazine he directs. We realize that what he now writes logically proceeds from the stand he has consistently maintained for the past eight years. But this article will be read by many others unfamiliar with his work. For this reason there is a point which, in justice to Mounier, must be made clear. It was not the defeat of France which produced his conviction that the human person can develop only through devotion to the community; nor is his attack on the pre-war conditions in his country, and of our civilization, the result of meditation after defeat. If France had been victorious he would be writing as he writes: with his country occupied he is not silent. *The Editors.*

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when what had been called the "war for Danzig" became in fact the "battle for France." But their change of heart came too late.

When it came the peasants took hold again, and it was easy to see and prove this from local incidents of bravery. But all around them the bourgeois spirit, that invisible and open wound in the body of the modern world, had completed its work of decomposition. Those thousands of men that for two or three generations had been made desperate by this bourgeois mentality, had been despoiled of all the riches that make a people sound: a joyful love of work, kindness, an innate generosity, a certain sense for great adventure such as for the sea, the universe, God, hospitality—those thousands of men who now knew only how to insist on their rights, who knew only how to argue, who could resort only to the distractions of insects, and succumb to the harshness of machines. These men were there, and the war had not miraculously transfigured them. They did not understand anything: they did not believe in anything; and, above all, they were not willing to die for anything: neither for God, nor for the revolution, nor for France, nor for a friend. They invented excuses. But they formed a sort of international of comfort and personal sellishness. They were not the whole nation; but they were numerous enough to paralyze its reflexes.

Leadership had not time

Leadership might have been able to conceal the evil if it had had time to profit by the renovation born of the ordeal itself. A thing we all hoped for still, only a few months ago. The French bourgeoisie which passed from civilian life into the army unfortunately also lived on its reputation. I do not wish to underestimate the deep sources of resistance that the bourgeoisie still possessed, although under somewhat timid, somewhat antiquated forms, in the depth of our provinces; but the best of that spirit remained sadly isolated from the march of history. The bourgeois spirit, if it could not inform the living doubtless carried some men to a glorious death. But, finally, it was largely paralyzed by another internationalism: that of the world of money, the values it put on things, the interests it followed, the hatreds which consumed it. Blinded for several years by the one danger of communism and that to the point of accepting *ipso facto* as salutary any initiative labeled anti-communist, and at least verbally violent, the bourgeoisie believed less than anyone else in the wisdom of this war. It saw that, whoever won, capitalism would be the victim, and feared too greatly that some form of encroachment upon its privileges would be the victor. That is the dead weight which depressed France's energy to resist. It was embodied in a common psychology which had its counterpart in military theory, the psychology of the defensive based on the strategy of fortified positions. Events proved once again that there can be no defensive war where one nation is sufficiently powerful to put into action the only effective military conception, that of an offensive war. These "lines," such as the line of the Albert Canal, or that of the Meuse, the Maginot Line, or the new line in the North, turned out to be weak illusions good only for fostering inertia in imagination and initiative: they were, alas, obstacles to the spirit much more than they were military barriers.

That is the France which has fallen. In the long run what prepared the ground for her defeat? What we condemn is more than a single event, it is an epoch, and more than a nation it is a sector of civilization. To be sure, much could be said about the profound solidarity of the ideologies that confronted each other throughout the world, often sharing the cloth of truth as they shared the cloak of error. But our purpose today is only to examine this decadence which the first violent blows of the war tried and found wanting. Whoever is ultimately the victor, this particular form of weakness will have been removed from the picture. The conflict was born of its deficiencies; it will be the only inevitable victim of the war.

Like every reality which is at all large in scope, this decadence cannot be reduced to ideological definition. The bourgeois spirit is at the heart of the trouble, if the word *bourgeois* is used not so much to designate a stratum in society as a state of mind, compounded of avarice, indifference to the well-being of others, insistence on the pound of flesh, mediocre comfort—and all this in varying degree from most harsh and aggressive forms down to those which are merely pleasantly self-indulgent and homely. Individualism is at the root of the evil—individualism which is not a measured sense of freedom, or the dignity of the human person, or the varied range of individual vocations—but which is an obstinate isolation of everyone in his own self-seeking, in his own tastes, in his ambitions, in his social relations which he carries into the struggle for existence. Each man suspicious of all others, and all men brawling in the market place. The economic and social instrument of this spirit is the world of money, with its strange classifications, its claims to divinity and preeminence evidenced by the wearing of a fourth button on one's vest (or a fifth: count them at a shop; I have none myself), or by the number of cylinders in a shiny and evil-smelling machine. In the case of France, if anything more were needed, a certain form of parliamentary and libertarian democracy heightened this disorder through its incompetence, irresponsibility, slovenliness and vulgarity—all perennial evils, but a little too prevalent in our country in the last few decades.

Such are a few of the realities that our Supreme

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Court at Riom will not bring before it, but which are at the very source of our disaster. May every country which wishes to be spared our ordeal defend itself from them before it is too late.

Not a new thing

A few young Frenchmen for a long time have been saying this in vain to their own country: The war which shakes Europe to its foundation is not imperialist but revolutionary. Europe divided against itself is giving birth to a new order, not only perhaps for Europe but for the whole world. Only a spiritual revolution and an institutional rebirth of the same scope as the fascist revolution could perhaps have saved France from destruction. The totalitarian countries present a frenzied image of the outlines of a civilization in which we will have to discover, after them and better than they have discovered, the profound essence.

Germany against the West is Sparta against Athens, the hard life against the pleasant life. I do not think that men can find nourishment in hardness alone. I do not think either that they can be really happy or really men through what the modern world calls pleasure. There are many possible forms for human grandeur: the men who sailed—Magellan, Columbus—toward gain and adventure, the knights who left to fight the infidel, your American Western pioneers, the captains of industry of the "good old days," form a motley assemblage; but no one of them would have confused sport with sitting in a stadium, nor the sense of life with the comfort of the living room. After a century of bourgeois languor the adventurous life again claims its place in the world. I see the twentieth century as a century of great stature, after a century that has inaccurately been called stupid, and which was perhaps worse, mediocre. There is no place in such an era for those who think only of defending the quiet of their own garden, their own home, their own countryside, their own habits. The vital question for every nation is to enter into this epoch with a high and valid purpose. For times of conquest are never easy times. I do not say that they cannot be times of joy. Our duty is to save the joy of life from the wreck of pleasure.

The death of individualism, whose knell was sounded from 1917 to 1933 by the fascist and communist revolutions, is not, thank Heaven, the death of the feeling for the human person. But we shall not save the latter by defending the former. I see a great similarity between the renaissance which today demands our adherence and that which in the sixteenth century decided the direction of the modern world. That earlier renaissance was a youthful, living revolt against dead forms, against a society as heavy of movement as was the antique armor of those who defended it; an order of authority which had been supple and good before it became rigid and oppressive. A real feeling for the human person and for human conscience inspired it. But the reform, as always, carried away the good with the abuse, tore out of the heart of modern man the feeling for a living community, and gave us little by little, with the help of legislators, philosophers and custom, that individual described by Renan as existing without family, without past, without fatherland, without neighbors, without ideals, without God—a helpless atom destined to be swallowed up one day in the powerful surge of the masses. It is the discontent with this individual and with his narrow and desolate life which the revolutions of the masses in the twentieth century express. Napoleon was conquered, the French revolution disappeared; whatever outcome Americans can imagine for the present conflict, this century will bring about throughout the world an anti-individualist and communitarian revolution. Let us not oppose it, let us not passively await its accomplishment, lest its force, too long contained, take the most violent forms and sweep away the basic rights of the human person. Every one of us can start this revolution. How? Change, for example, the spirit in which we insist on our rights; take a stand for responsibility rather than for irresponsible independence; devote ourselves to humble values, such as neighborhood relationships, the spirit of hospitality, cooperation. In certain Indian tribes, they say, a traveler who thanked his host was insulted as a boor. The most traditional Christian doctrine as regards private property makes it the duty of every individual to distribute to the community his entire surplus wealth. Such customs which seem quaint to us are nonetheless much more natural than our own.

I appeal to those of you who were soldiers from 1914 to 1918. You will remember having seen a new world opening to you when you passed through the railroad stations and marched along the roads; arms waved to you in greeting, hands extended in friendliness, hearts opened. Contact was made between man and man. There was a brief moment when merchants no longer sold for profit, when doors were no longer doors, and possessions no longer sacred. Then came the day when the war was over, our uniforms discarded: that miraculous and temporary world closed its heart again and returned to its own frigid indifference: the idyl was ended. Eyes lost their light, countenances closed, hands grasped money again, men spoke of debts and gossiped. Read the desperate literature of Germany right after the war. Compare with it some of the works of the new Germany or of new Russia. You will see that the great lesson of the totalitarian revolutions is the urgency for our world to rediscover a feeling for and the customs of the community.

But it is not only in our ways of living that we

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shall give life to the revolution of the living person and the living community against the avarice and disorder of individualism. Individualism has penetrated and molded our institutions for three centuries. It is not for me to pass judgment here on institutions other than those of my own country. We must not attribute the death of French parliamentarianism to an accident nor to the conqueror's will. Whatever the result of the war might have been, whatever France may be tomorrow, parliamentarism had had its day. Governing from the Left or governing from the Right, radical or reactionary, it had unquestionably manifested its failure and impotence. I do not think that the nations will immediately, or soon, succeed in finding that balance between authority and freedom, between order and the free play of institutions, which is the ideal of a sound society. We must take into account history's law of balance; the pendulum swings back and forth. The Europe of the next few years, and once again independently of the continuing conflict, will be an authoritarian Europe because too long it was a libertarian Europe. Whoever has not made a serious revision of his philosophy of freedom and of the political forms that it implies is a conservative, even if he lists himself among "advanced" spirits. We are forced now to find a place for freedom in authoritarian régimes (I do not say totalitarian). We can no longer seek merely to insert a modicum of order in régimes that are libertarian. Idle money, careless in its speculations of the destiny of peoples and of the organic reality of social communities, was another instrument of the liberal disorder. Money, too, is condemned as that order dies.

If France and other countries, foregoing misfortune or fear, no matter what happens, can effect this awakening of conscience and this effort of interior renewal before it is too late, the ordeal will not have been in vain. And a great country is like a man of character who counts upon himself and his own efforts in the present, rather than upon the uncertainties of the future.

Graham Greene

An appraisal of a young novelist who more and more proves his mettle.

By **Harry Sylvester**

IT IS Graham Greene's curious fate that he should live and write in a time when an unbelievable number of literate people are not quite sure what he is talking about. This is no fault of Graham Greene's but is due principally to the fact that he happens to be the first major English-writing novelist who is also a Catholic. Being such it is only natural that one of his perception and sensitivity should write of aspects of Catholicism not only not known to non-Catholics (nor even suspected by most of them) but unknown also to many Catholics. Add to this a style which for subtlety and unstressed implication is second only to that of someone like Stendhal, and it is easy to see why Greene is sometimes misunderstood or even praised for the wrong reasons.

It is the blunt fact that American Catholicism is only now barely becoming ready for a novelist like Greene. When a man sets out to write about "the appalling strangeness of the mercy of God," it is not a thing for which even our Catholic universities here have prepared us adequately. Secular critics in this country have been sadly puzzled and even subtly annoyed by Mr. Greene. For here is a writer who is both genuine and possessed of distinction, and yet from whose work comes the pale reek of Catholicism. It isn't fair, they feel; he's a kind of literary sport; the case, they feel charitably, might even be one for tears.

So, frequently, they patronize Greene, make no particular effort to understand the implications of his work (as they so zealously strive to understand the semi-literate maunderings of some of our political novelists) and even fail to realize that Greene can say more about poor people and why they are poor and what poverty has done to them, just in the course of one of his "entertainments," than a professionally proletarian novelist like, say, Albert Maltz can in three hundred pages of tosh proclaimed loudly from the housetops of *The New Masses* as a proletarian novel and significant.

Ezra Pound, certainly no one to cast his praise carelessly about, has said of Greene: "What counts and what makes for good writing . . . is economic awareness. Graham Greene, without any propagandizing, has gauged to a milligramme the exact amount of monetary pressure on each of his characters." What is at least equally important is that Greene has done so almost incidentally, sacrificing none of the literary virtues to merely economic awareness, however important he may feel that awareness to be.

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Yet part of the attitude of the critics and the literate public in this country toward Greene is his own fault. As with many writers he has had to make a living, and much of his early work is composed of what he calls "entertainments," mystery and adventure novels but so extraordinarily well written as to shame many books done with more serious intention. When "Brighton Rock" was published in this country, it was treated as a kind of super-adventure story instead of what it actually is—one of the most terrible and penetrating studies in good and evil that has been written in years. American critics have a slothful fondness for pigeon-holing writers but it has never led them into more stupid mistakes than they made in writing of "Brighton Rock."

Greene did many things in that book. He drew, for those who cared to see, the terrible delineation between the concept of good and evil as distinguished from the concept of legal right and wrong. He restored to murder the dignity which innumerable "moider mysteries," as we used to say in Brooklyn, had taken away from it. In his picture of the Boy, that satanic child who dominates the book, he gave, among other things, a complete commentary on the possible effect of Puritanism on an adolescent's attitude toward sex. He said, in effect, that there is a kind of chastity, warped and misinformed, whose effect can be worse than any lust. (And our colleges are full of it, if in less virulent form.)

And yet Greene was considered by some to have written merely a super de luxe murder mystery, and one lady Sunday reviewer (*libera nos Domine!*) seemed to think that the Boy was a homosexual and that Greene had introduced this element into the book simply as an added titilation. Whatever else the Boy was—and he was evil—he was not a homosexual. He was as morbid in his attitude toward sex as one could well be, but he was not homosexual. He feared and hated all sex and had as little use for men as for women. The lady probably didn't know what to call this, and figured it must be homosexuality.

It was not until the recent publication in this country of Greene's best book, "The Labyrinthine Ways," that his true stature began to be realized and appreciation of it expressed, however grudgingly in some instances. It is perhaps very close to being a great book and reveals Greene as—he is only 34 now—perhaps a great artist. The most a contemporary can truly say of a book is that it is genuine—and that "The Labyrinthine Ways" assuredly is.

His development

In its style—except where Greene's facility in the use of figures of speech gets the better of him—it deserves to rank with Joyce and the best of Hemingway. And yet this is only part of it, whereas style is almost the entire thing with Hemingway that we can unreservedly admire, while Greene possesses also an insight and a spiritual and intellectual maturity which most artists die without achieving. Pity is not common to the young, and today few artists of any age possess it truly. Greene's pity extends to nearly all people, not with the mawkishness of a Steinbeck, who deliberately sets a moron in a normal society and then proceeds to create a false, pitiful situation about him; Greene knows that the conqueror is pitiful, too, something Steinbeck doesn't as yet know.

In "The Labyrinthine Ways" it seems to me that Greene reserves his deepest pity for the lieutenant of police, nameless like the priest, who hunts the priest through the jungle and mountains of southern Mexico. The lieutenant, partly symbolic of certain extreme Leftists, actually loves the poor and their children; loves them so that he is "quite prepared to make a massacre for their sakes—first the Church and then the foreigner and then the politician—even his own chief would one day have to go. He wanted to begin the world again with them, in a desert." "They deserved nothing less than the truth," the lieutenant thinks, "a vacant universe and a cooling world, the right to be happy in any way they chose."

The priest caught and about to be shot, the lieutenant talks with him, even tries to get the last fallen-away and unofficial priest left in the state to hear this doomed priest's confession. Now that it is the end, the lieutenant is inexplicably weary. He does not know why. He is beyond anger; he was never angry even during the hunt. His mission fulfilled—until the next priest comes along—he is even beyond hate; yet something puzzles him and he does not feel the proper, the commensurate joy. The weak priest now suddenly visible as a martyr and a hero, the lieutenant's latest and youngest disciple now spits at the lieutenant as he passes him in the street. . . . This is a long way from Tom Wolfe bellowing in the night and even further away from Willie Saroyan.

Although Greene is always aware, in the words of the old priest in "Brighton Rock," of "the appalling strangeness of the mercy of God," he is still very much the child of his times: he has no pity for the rich. It is easy to tell whom other writers hate but Greene hates no one, not even the rich; yet for the rich, neither has he any pity. It seems to him, I think, that almost anyone can be justified but them. The implication of great wealth is too broad, including inevitably too many things that are evil and not merely wrong, for pity to be able to extend to it.

For those who have waited a long time for a major, English-writing novelist who would write of things Catholic subtly and in their fullest implication, the wait is at an end. Nor is it likely that

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we shall soon have any superior to Graham Greene. Neither "Brighton Rock" nor "The Labyrinthine Ways" is a book to give scandal. As with the best and subtlest craftsmen—Stendhal, Maugham, sometimes Hemingway and Faulkner—Greene is able to write of certain things in such a way that the knowing are not disturbed and the ignorant are not aware.

Greene's contemporary

There is very little to separate Greene from those of our contemporary novelists who are considered great—Mann, Undset, Romains. A certain over-facility, a mind which thinks up figures of speech too fast and fluently to make for really great writing—a tendency to use coincidence a bit too much—a throwback, probably, to his earlier "entertainments"—these are all small things and ones which there is every evidence of Greene's eliminating from his work.

On the other hand there is hardly any other writer alive who has in such fullness all his talents; talents informed by a deeply thought and reasoned Christianity, aware of the strange and terrible power of evil in the world and yet not moved—at least not yet—to the decadence which has come into the work of such as Thomas Mann and Sholem Asch, novelists whose deep religious sense sets them apart from most other fine novelists of our time, but which has not kept a certain decadence from their work.

And so one becomes a little weary wondering just what a novelist like Greene has to do to make an impression on American critics. He has been even patronized. *Time* Magazine's smug and anonymous critic was perhaps most stupid of all. He dismissed "The Labyrinthine Ways" rather lightly because he felt that it dealt with a mythical religious persecution in Mexico. Even if it did, I don't know just how that would reflect on the literary quality of the book, but since so many critics today seem to feel that veracity of substance is more important than form in a work of art, the fact is that there has been persecution like the persecution Greene wrote about. It has, on occasion, been in all the newspapers.

Curiously, thoroughly Protestant England recognizes Greene's genius, both critically and commercially. V. S. Pritchett even thinks Greene "may have initiated a movement which will wean the English novel away from its present competent dullness," and at least one of his books has been a Book Club selection there. In choosing such poor writers as Saroyan and Mildred Walker while ignoring such as Sigrid Undset, Graham Greene and Georges Bernanos, the book clubs here offer a sufficient commentary on the prejudices which inform most American criticism.

Christ and the Artist

By **Jean C. de Ménasce**

I AM MORE a man than I am an apothecary, more a man than an artist. Only too often these days what is professional overrides and replaces what is human. Is it a good thing to see such professional specialization invade the most human and the deepest of domains: the meeting of a man with Christ?

* * *

Of course we ever remain partly ourselves in Christ's presence, and our calling leaves some imprint on our personalities. The humility of the centurion has a soldierly brusquesness: "I say come, and he comes, go and he goes." In his surrender there lingers something of the top-sergeant. The humility of Mary Magdalen recalls what she has been. Her surrender is feminine and even a little theatrical. His style is his moustache; hers, her tresses.

* * *

Christ gets at each of us by using the thing familiar to each. Peter is more deeply moved, more readily overcome by the miraculous draught of fishes—fins and nets are his familiars—than by theologically greater miracles. Péguy was moved by God's style.

* * *

Rather than classifying people as apothecaries, students, artists, street cleaners, I know not what, would it not be more fitting to classify them in their relationship to Christ, according as their temperaments are optimist and pessimist, repentant sinners and without sin, reserved and passionate, emotional and intellectual, individualist and sociable? One might perhaps find one apothecary among the passionate, more than one artist and several courtesans among the calculating.

* * *

There are not several Christs, an elegant Christ for the worldlings and a plain Christ for the simple; there are not two Truths. The Christian tidings are at once so simple that they can be grasped by the child who mumbles an Our Father and from its mother's arms blows the Crucifix a kiss; and at once so deep that wise men are confounded.

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Christ does not change tone or range when He speaks. In Saint Paul we find some spirit of accommodation (as in what he says to the Athenians); Christ's style is always quiet and plain. Effortlessly He sets Himself to plumbing the depths: "A man had two sons." His parables are as open and fathomless as the glance of a child.

* * *

A cobbler talks well about old shoes, a king about his realm. God talks with quietness, calm and depth about God. Will an artist paint Christ better the more he has contemplated Him? Yes and no.

"He who sees me sees my Father also." And when Jeremias saw God, he could only exclaim, "O! O! O!"

It seems to me that were I an artist or a poet, I could not dispassionately take notes or make sketches in the midst of ecstasy: "Silentium laus tua."

I could not readily look upon Christ as one element in a composition, with due consideration for mass and volume, the very while He can bestow on me the newness and the burning of love. It is surely because I am not an artist that I am revolted by the saying of the poet Heine: "Out of great sufferings I make little songs."

* * *

The artist, the true artist—and how many are there?—knows the feeling of awe. And that already is a great deal.

* * *

Can one ask of a father who is a surgeon that he operate upon his own son? Will not his hand tremble? It takes a certain hardness and absence of feeling to practice one's trade. Doubtless it takes respect for the trade as well; without it you are a butcher; but it takes an unpremeditated movement and even a certain ease, without which art is hobbled. And so the artist, when he sets to work upon Christ, ought in some sense to repeat the request of a saint to whom ecstasy denied rest, and who could not accomplish her necessary work after fervent nights: "Oh, Lord, do let me sleep!" Philip Neri used to act the clown so as not to fall into an ecstasy, and so as to be able to celebrate with propriety the sacrifice of the Mass. The artist should say to Christ, "Forgive me if I look coldly upon Thee, as I might look upon a tree or a mandolin."

I wonder whether all this is but a blind alley. Yet Saint Thomas seems to me a good model. Before he wrote he used often to press his broad, thoughtful forehead against the tabernacle; but when he writes, he writes humanly, incisively, rationally, very coldly. He speaks of God in the same objective way as he speaks of other matters: *"vidatur quod non,"* and he never interrupts the flow of his discourse with, "O my God, who am I to speak thus?" He does not use his dry prose as a foil for *Ahs* and *Ohs,* nor even for resplendent and moving outpourings, as does Saint Augustine.

* * *

The primitives give their Christs and Madonnas faces human and true, faces you have seen. And those faces have the complexity, the richness, the unplumbable mystery of life. Today we would improve on this. We meditate Christ's countenance, we meditate an *expressive* countenance, a divine countenance. And by virtue of thinking on such a countenance, we end up with a set expression, a Delsarte of the face, empty of all human content and expressing only some idea—sweetness, prayer, strength—poor presumptuous masks.

* * *

A Christian artist should have a pictorial sense of Christian truths.

It was not through naïve anachronism that the primitives clothed Christ or the Virgin in European clothes, or placed them in Italian, French, Flemish landscapes. Their casualness toward historic truth has deeper reasons. They know that Christ is closer to us than the people of our own race or our own language, and they express this truth of love with simplicity and efficacy by placing Him in a familiar setting.

* * *

An artist does not need to make a great fuss in order to talk about God; Christian greatness is not solemn or ceremonious; rather is it friendly and homelike. Yaveh, the hidden God, the God of hosts, Whom none can look upon and live, "You will find wrapped in swaddling clothes."

On the campanile at Florence the sculptor has figured truth as a round-cheeked monk, with an open, happy smile. That broad face, benevolent and full of peace, tells more about truth than some naked young woman holding in her hand a torch.

Water, bread, olive oil are much more like God than perfume, flowers, illuminations and flashes of lightning—a likeness asserted by God Himself. Christian truths will not suffer grandiose rhetorical, epileptic, wordy transformations.

* * *

To paint a landscape without falling into either pantheistic tremors or Manichaean hate, to look upon nature as a little sister, for whom we must have respect, but with whom we can play, to strike a balance between awe and rustic joy—all that is to do a Christian work.

The Christian virtues of honesty, of simplicity, of humility, of love and respect, of joy, of balance and initiative: the balance of a Christian humanism compounded of intelligence and feeling wherein flesh and spirit are both respected—this, transposed, can yield great artistic virtues.

The vision of the Catholic world—romantic and classic, joyful and sad, sober and puckish—permits of a great work of art.

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The battle between art and morality has caused much ink to flow; let the dead bury their dead. The artist has no rights against God any more than the philosopher or the politician. But a Christian artist should never be torn asunder, for in God all is united, all is harmony.

* * *

The corruption of the best is the worst. It seems to me that the most immoral work is not some horrid fountain wherein a naked lady sprawls in unstable equilibrium among fishes; but rather a work in which ambiguity leads astray. Da Vinci's John the Baptist, who strangely resembles his young Bacchus, seems to me a painting of the most voluntarily immoral tendency possible.

* * *

There are no forbidden and no required realms for the Christian artist. He has a right to the moving picture, the ballet, the novel, to architecture; he has a right to every subject: "Everything is yours." Christian artist does not signify artist for convent girls or seminarians. The artist even has a right to go down into the depths, so long as there is in him no compliance therewith, no connivance thereat.

* * *

To be free of connivance does not mean to be free of love. God causes "the rain to fall upon the good and upon the wicked." God bestows fine moral and intellectual qualities on people who do not go to church, and life often smiles upon sinners. A Christian artist need not be more royalist than the king, more a moralist than God. To prove his faith, he need not always have his villain die in the agony of destitution.

God directs this world's play—a play having nothing in common with a moral tale. To be free of connivance does not mean to be an embittered preacher, full of frustration and resentment.

* * *

We doubtless owe to Christianity the leaven which ceaselessly ferments the arts of Western civilizations. "Be ye perfect" places at the heart of our civilization a dynamism and a permanent instability. The arts which flower under other religions are almost immobile.

So also we owe to Christianity an art overflowing with richness. The multiplicity of problems, views, conflicts, of the aspects of life, is a Christian heritage. Love, woman, wine, warfare, the gods—these are eternal themes, but the orchestration of these themes owes much to Christianity.

* * *

An artist has no right to smuggle in bad art under cover of a great subject. Nor has he the right to reduce his subject matter as nearly as possible to non-existence in order to parade his art. The artist has no right to be either a cheat or a vain man. Wherever a great subject and technical skill complement each other, we have an art which most completely satisfies man: the great cathedrals, the Divine Comedy, Bach's Saint John's Passion.

* * *

Art for art's sake empties art; political art enslaves art; art for God's sake is an equilibrium.

The incarnation, the mysteries of the Faith, the sacraments trouble philosophers and beginners; Truth made flesh and not into a book, the Gift of God conveyed through water, bread, wine—here is wherewith to make them lose their fine assurance. The artist understands a little better that the whole spirit can wholly convey itself in a gesture; the work of art prepares him dimly to understand the mystery of the universe become personal.

* * *

A learned man more easily than an artist will be able to fall into the trap of deism or Protestantism, of a religion stripped of rites, of a handsome system beautifully lucid. The artist, who has a feeling for life, at once understands that such systems are too highly *purified* to be profound.

* * *

Clarity on the one hand, obscurity on the other; two and two make four, and the Great Unknowable. A nice, precise little universe and a great unknowable carefully raked up and piled to one side: such is the universe pleasing to philosophers and mathematicians. The artist knows that mystery dwells in the heart of things and that clarity leades to obscurity. "Ye shall enter, ye shall go forth and find fat pastures."

* * *

The Cartesian with his clear ideas and his mechanics is embarrassed by the mystery, the carelessness, the illogical appearance of life. The novelist on the contrary knows that what is obscure is made clear by what is more obscure, and that to explain a being it is often necessary to discover it more bizarre and not more logical.

The scientific spirit needs symmetries that are flattering, and suspect. The artist is not afraid of life and its mystery, which is not the absurd, but rather that superabundance which foils any attempt at inventory.

* * *

The artist more readily than the physicist or the mathematician can understand that between God and His faithful "love should have intervened, with its enormous disturbances and its extravagant logic." The love of God, the immovable Mover (as others put it) is like a woman who turns her house upside down to find a penny (as He described Himself). A calculating spirit cannot succeed in understanding such a hurly-burly for so meagre a result, and that the Reason of the universe should have put on flesh, should have been thirsty and should have seated Himself, fatigued, by the side of a well.

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Art has as its ultimate object the playing of a priestly rôle, to sanctify nature and lead it back toward God. The Christian artist gives to silent creation a voice and the wherewithal to satisfy its deepest desire: praise.

* * *

Christian life is scorn of the world, and lives hidden in God, but it is love and not poverty which should cut us off from all things.

After the multiplication of the loaves, Christ ordered that the fragments be collected in order that nothing might be lost. The artist furnishes Christ with one of those baskets which saves, by uniting it to Christ, everything in nature having some value or beauty. Nothing can be lost. Hell is to receive only hatred and a humanity bereft of its substance.

* * *

Wherever the Christian artist paints a picture for a church, he opens a door in the wall whereby the soul enters, goes forth and finds God. The profane artist arouses the imagination; the Christian artist arouses love. What a joy to create a work beautiful enough to guide and sustain a soul toward God, yet humble enough and self-effacing enough not to act as a barrier by virtue of its own beauty. Like Virgil the Christian artist leads men to the very threshold of Paradise; from thence forward there is no longer any guide or any path.

Best Sellers

An analysis of what a great public pays good money for.

By **Edward Skillin, Jr.**

HOWEVER much it is due to the sobering effects of the times, the fiction and non-fiction titles which have been achieving the largest American sales in the last six months are notable for their restraint. There are one or two instances of blood-and-thunder and brutality and frankness, but they are definitely the exceptions. As usual, the choices made by the Book Clubs have pretty largely dominated the best seller field. In fiction the big exception is *How Green Was My Valley* by Richard Llewellyn which right down to date has continuously been a fiction leader, as the book sellers call it, almost since its publication day last February. In the non-fiction field the only sizable non-fiction book which has consistently been among the leaders is Mortimer J. Adler's *How To Read a Book. Country Squire in the White House* by John T. Flynn and *American White Paper* by Joseph Alsop, Jr. and Robert Kintner, are both of them small, low-priced books and have directly to do with the most current issues of the day.

The war, in fact, has surprisingly little to do with the books which have sold the most copies during the last six months. Upton Sinclair's *World's End* deals with the last war and the mistakes which sowed some of the seeds for the present war. *Mrs. Miniver* by Jan Struther adverts to the present war before the Battle of Britain only a few times in passing. *The Fire and the Wood* by R. C. Hutchinson, however, is definitely about the nazis, the Jewish problem and the threat of totalitarianism. *The Failure of a Mission* by Sir Neville Henderson, a Book-of-the-Month-Club choice last spring, was widely cited at the time but its sales have not continued at their early pace since the scene in Europe has changed so radically.

Fiction

How Green Was My Valley by Richard Llewellyn. Without a question this lament for simpler and more hearty times has been the most popular novel of the past six months. A good deal of publicity perhaps went into the sales, but it did not have the sizable, automatic market that is supplied by the Literary Guild or the Book of the Month Club (from 100,000 to 125,000 copies). A number of reasons can be ascribed for its success. For one thing it provided an absorbing escape from present realities. For another it embodied an ardent belief in a way of life—although that way of life was recognized as a thing of the past. "How Green Was My Valley" at the same time is highly autobiographical and there are few themes that are more attractive than the various stages of the unfolding of life and its meaning through the eyes of a sensitive and intelligent person. A few of my friends found the book rather slow going, but readers generally seem to have taken to this at times lyrical narrative of nineteenth century Wales with genuine and unflagging interest.

Mrs. Miniver by Jan Struther. This series of tenuously connected sketches of life among England's well-to-do, just before the war broke out

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in earnest, is undeniably clever. If a reader has a mind to, he could complete the book in an hour or two without skipping a single comma, but these informal sketches of a mother, her husband and her three children and some of her friends might better be taken in small doses. Each little sketch comprises a tiny whole, each makes a lightly pointed comment about life. Mrs. Miniver's England is a very civilized one, and her appreciation of such things as windshield wipers, hearthsides, children's reactions and dressing gowns verges on the epicurean (I use that term in its rightful rather than its popular connotation). Many of these things devolve upon the human liberties that England is fighting for. In a small way this best-seller is a paean of happy marriage and here and there *Mrs. Miniver* indicates her real appreciation of things on a large human scale.

Mr. Skeffington by Elizabeth. *Mr. Skeffington* is somewhat related in spirit to *Mrs. Miniver.* It is the clever drawing room type of thing with the same amused lightness of touch. Mrs. Skeffington, however, who is the protagonist of this book, is up to the very eleventh hour a heartless beauty whose greatest delight is leading men on and then turning her back on them. She does not lead a normal family life. It is the ravages of time which succeed in bringing her to task. Finally she is faced with a serious choice and her belated decision gives the book a noble ending, at least. "Mrs. Miniver" is quietly urbane while "Mr. Skeffington" up to the very last pages is somewhat maliciously sly. In that its narrative is continuous, Mr. S. is more effective for sustained reading.

World's End by Upton Sinclair. The furor over this book came a good deal on account of its timing, I think, for it was the Literary Guild's selection for July. The publishers were lucky that the book appeared just after the Germans had overrun Holland and Belgium and France and were threatening to invade England, for here was a story that attempted to explain the background of it all. From first to last, it is a novel of ideas rather than of people, that is, of people who come alive. Even the son of the munitions manufacturer, the youth who serves as the author's mouthpiece, undergoes one experience after another in a sort of theoretic fashion. Mr. Sinclair's method is to contrast this idea with that idea, and with notable personages often thrust suddenly into the narrative the stage machinery seems to creak on numerous occasions. Perhaps he tried to do it too fast. The ideas themselves are a mixture of soundness and futility. There are several stirring tirades against social injustice, two or three observations which indicate Upton Sinclair's prejudice against religion and the Church and at the end, when the peace of Versailles has crystallized into something untenable, the conviction is expressed that there is not much use in doing anything but lolling around in the Mediterranean sun. *World's End* is hardly a first-rate novel.

Stars on the Sea by F. Van Wyck Mason. As far as can be determined this blood and thunder novel should be included in the list of the largest selling novels of the past few months, although it was not the choice of either of the book clubs. It seems to be the one title on the whole list of best sellers which deals with life in the raw. It is part of a series that Mr. Mason is doing about American Revolutionary times and the average reader, I think, would find himself wondering whether the people of that day were really as brutal and immoral as Mr. Mason portrays them. To be sure, his protagonists do not derive from the calmest circles of respectability. In any case he presents their adventurous careers, if that is what you would call them, in a manner which does not spare sensitivities.

The Fire and the Wood by R. C. Hutchinson. The fact that this was a Literary Guild selection entitles it perhaps to be included in this list. It has not sold as many copies outside the book club subscriptions as several other novels not included in this list. The proportions of this book are somewhat the same as those in "Mr. Skeffington." The greater part of it has to do with brutality, abnormality and human misery in nazi and pre-nazi Germany. In fact some reviewers were so distressed by the prevalent depressing mood of the book that they were beyond the lift of the few pages of exultation which attempt to rescue the story toward the end. The tubercular servant girl who achieves the regeneration of the cold-blooded German Jewish doctor has her moods of idealism, but they are of a repelling, abnormal kind. Perhaps it depends upon the reader's temperament whether the theme of regeneration can compensate for so woeful a tale.

Non-fiction

From almost any point of view, by far the most interesting best seller of the past few months, fiction or non-fiction, is *New England: Indian Summer by Van Wyck Brooks.* The very subject is a veritable picnic ground for book lovers, and Mr. Brooks has approached it with such enthusiasm, such diligence and such literary skill that anyone who has any interest in American literature at all would do well to invest in a copy. In a way New England's flowering was not so much the production of a few great authors—Emerson, Hawthorne, Thoreau, Norton, etc.—or a few great works, as it was the intellectual and, to a lesser extent, artistic awakening of a people. In the same way New England's decline was reflected primarily in the change of outlook of the people rather than the worth of the writings of the period. The author ascribes this change of heart immediately following the Civil War to a number of

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interesting things. At the outset there was the moral and intellectual let-down which as far as we know seems inevitably to follow every war. Then there was the rapid growth of transportation which tended to level American regional differences. Once the battle against Negro slavery had been won, there seemed to be no cause clear-cut enough to enlist the minds and energies of New England, and modern industrialism began to develop to the point where it was taking widespread human toll. In the cultural centers of New England before the Civil War, religious faith no longer had much of a defined content, and when the mind was no longer lifted by its first contacts with the rich wisdom and attainments of Europe and the East, that lack of faith began to make itself widely felt. But "Indian Summer" is far more than a discussion of the cultural decline of New England. It is filled with delightful impressions of some of the most interesting figures that ever promenaded across the American stage: Francis Parkman, the Adamses and the Jameses, William Dean Howells, Emily Dickinson, Thomas Bailey Aldrich and William Graham Sumner. They are all presented as an integral part of a fascinating artistic whole. "Indian Summer" is a book to read critically and lovingly, to read and re-read in the years to come.

Country Squire in the White House by John T. Flynn. This captious little book is leading the publishers' non-fiction best seller list in these final pre-election days. There will be more to say about it in our next issue, but it is interesting to remark that it seems to be selling considerably better than a book which says the same thing from the positive angle, "This Is Wendell Willkie."

I Married Adventure by Osa Martin Johnson. Perhaps the most entertaining of this whole list in a straightforward, unpretentious way, this autobiographical account of expeditions to darkest Africa, the South Seas, etc., etc., has been a consistent best seller since it was chosen by the Literary Guild last June. It is objective rather than meditative and Mr. and Mrs. Johnson had far more than their share of exciting adventures with big game, dark natives and winds and storms. Theirs was also a success story on an American scale ranging from a simple expedition in a 28-foot boat to a safari of six cars, four motor lorries, five wagons and two hundred and thirty-five natives. "I Married Adventure" is one of the best examples of present day escapist literature at hand.

As I Remember Him by Hans Zinsser. This autobiography has been about equally popular with the book noted just above. The appeal here is the interest in medicine and in those American scientists who have done so much to stamp out disease in many parts of the world. Frankly an agnostic, the doctor seemed deeply concerned for the well-being of his fellow humans. He writes about his personal experiences with considerable restraint, but seems to pride himself in the degree to which he can talk around a subject. His style moves swiftly and his life moves easily and makes not uninspiring reading. It is too bad that the method he chose to unfold this career is at times a bit too humorously self-conscious and superior. But he supplies a good deal of information for those who are interested in medicine—and how many they are!

Failure of a Mission by Sir Neville Henderson. This is a personal account of Britain's failure to win Hitler by appeasement. One of its most curious elements is the way Neville Henderson experienced such difficulty holding satisfactory parley with the dictator of Berchtesgaden. But history has moved on since the publication of this book.

American White Paper by Joseph Alsop, Jr. and Robert Kintner. More current is this brief outline of America's foreign policy during the recent crisis and the beginning of the second world war. Those competent Washington columnists write with authority, presenting with assuredness the reactions of the President, Secretary Hull and others to the various developments of those tragic days. Included in an appendix are some historic statements by the President at various stages of the game, and it is very handy to have them all together. For those who wonder what we should do next, "American White Paper" carries some worthwhile lessons.

How to Read a Book by Mortimer J. Adler. This book continues to sell, combining an appeal to the American desire for self-improvement with a competent series of directions how to do something well. The book has come to stay. It is not easy reading, but it does repay the efforts required to follow Dr. Adler through to his conclusions. One of his most interesting chapters deals with the elements that go to constitute a classic. The list of classics he appends corresponds to the educational experiment carried on at St. John's at Annapolis.

All in all it would seem that the best work being done among popular writers these days is in the field of non-fiction. More than one writer has remarked that these are not propitious times for creative, imaginative work, for harsh realities impinge on every side. Research, on the other hand, is another matter, for it is still possible to concentrate attention on the work of others, where the deepening of one's own thoughts requires serenity plus effort of heroic proportions. And for those who have no idea of writing a volume or two it is quite feasible over here to find a quiet corner for a few hours with a good book. In many city apartments and other homes, of course, there is still at times the difficulty of finding how to silence a blatant radio. But all you need is sufficient determination to win out.

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Translating

By HARRY LORIN BINSSE

TRANSLATING under any circumstances is a nuisance. It's not so much that the process involves hard work; most hard work carries with it a certain satisfaction of its own; one may do it ill or well, but when it is done, it is done, and one knows it is done. Somehow translating is never done. You think you are finished with it, and then you wake up in the middle of the night remembering the word you couldn't think of, and for which you had to use an *ersatz*. But even if you strike one of those happy moods when all the words come true, when nothing stops you and you feel you really have done a job, still the thing is not satisfactory, for you will never do what a translator should do: recreate in English the creation in some other language wrought by your author.

That is the sad truth. If you are asked to interpret a business letter, or a law, or a piece out of a textbook, there is no trouble to it. You can see at a glance what the writer or the legislator or the professor meant, and your problem is merely to state the same meaning in English. You can do it dryly or you can do it wittily—no one cares tuppence. But most translating isn't that way. Mostly you have to work on a man with a style—sometimes even on a man with a very bad style. And you are supposed to try to give the reader some idea of that style. Which is where the hitch is.

What, after all, is style? It is easy enough to ask the question. What makes the question even easier to ask is that half the world knows style when it sees it. The crassest schoolboy (much crasser than ever came within measuring distance of Macaulay) *does* like Poe, and Poe is as much style as anything. Almost you could define style as being that way of writing which people recognize as writing, and not as scribbling. But then the trouble is that people think a number of kinds of writing are pretty wonderful which really, in the long run, aren't wonderful at all. Spartacus to the Gladiators is not wonderful, except the first time you hear it, and even then some kids wonder if it isn't a little bit boloney. At least I did.

But that doesn't get you anywhere in answer to the question about style. Style is the meaning of meaning. Style is nine-tenths hard work and one-tenth genius (maybe the *tenths* are wrong, and maybe that was a definition of genius to begin with . . . but then, genius and style bear some kinship to each other). Style is split rhythm; style is energy; style is the outward expression of an inward dynamism. . . . You can keep that game up for hours. Anyway, style is what you are supposed to translate.

And you can't do it.

By what authority do you say this? Well, I began with the *litter of puppies,* like many another subjected, thank God, to a good sound Latin schooling. That, however, was no preparation for the art we are discussing. We outdid each other in providing the ancient writers with the most wooden shoes our brains could devise, and a few of us did it with malice aforethought: if our Ovid had been neatly rendered, it would have smelled of the trot, and that would have served no purpose.

But one thing those idle years provided was a strange interest in what has happened to words. I remember the man who started it, and a most unlikely starter of anything. He has a brother in the New Deal, but judging by my specimen of the stock, that brother is a sport. And I don't use the word in any but its biological sense. This admirable, and for me thrice-blessed, pedagogue had the habit of amusing himself by writing on the blackboard simple arithmetic equations which indicated the strange things that happened to words in the course of a century or more. Thus he would point out that *lewed* is the antonym of *learned,* and that it was only that, until not too long ago. So a lewd story is a traveling salesman's only through a strange sort of historical, intellectual snobbery. So, too, *virtue* is *power* or *strength,* and nothing stuffy. This study, which was quite outside the realm of credits, used to be called "semantics," though today that honorable name has been appropriated by a much lesser matter—the phenomenon of the use of words purposely to deceive, as when Mr. Hitler calls his régime *democratic,* or an employer talks of his workmen's sacred *liberty* not to join a union.

But my interest remained. It even got far enough to enjoy the tricks to be done with Grimm's Law. *Guèpe,* it appears, is the same as *wasp,* and and *guetter* as *watch,* which is fun if you can prove it. There is a point, however, at which any normal person's interest in philology begins to lag, and that is when he hears of the Old Norse open (or was it closed?) *O* of which no specimen exists in Old Norse, but which must have been there once because otherwise the phonetic laws would be wrong, and that is absurd, q.e.d.

Translation and roots

What, you may properly ask, has all this to do with translation? I myself wouldn't know if I had not run into it the first time I had any translating to do where no one could suspect the presence of a trot. That was a new experience. I had been hired as an editor on a paper whose publisher watched his dollars so closely he couldn't see them fly out of the window. I was supposed to do a bit of translating. French was the language in case, and I shall never forget the first time I took a piece out of *Le Temps* and began to try to put it into English. The office rule was that I must dictate my work. I pushed and pulled and had the

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stenographer chewing large pieces out of her pencil, until suddenly I saw a word which put me at ease. It was *pardonner,* and at once I thought of *forgive.* Nothing strange about that, but it was a revolution for me. *Give* meant *donner,* so *par* must mean *for*[*e*]. *Par* is merely a sort of emphatic prefix, so *for*[*e*] must be the same. Yet we have *foretell,* but we also have *predire,* so the prefix *for*[*e*] must have a little idea of the future in it. Then there is *foreswear* and *parjurer,* with more semantics crept into the latter than the former. All this may seem utterly confusing to a person who has never sat down at a typewriter and tried to translate, but to one who has, it is a flash from heaven. It means that instead of turning to the dictionary every third word, you think of the word itself, analyze it, and then try to construct such a word in English by the same, or analogous, linguistic rules—and in many a case, presto! there you are. You have something no dictionary will give you, and yet it is more precise than anything any dictionary will ever give you.

What (a rhetorical question is again in order) has all this to do with style? Style is what you are supposed to translate, not words. There is one qualification to be made at once. Every (this time purely Macaulay's) schoolboy remembers "Mais où sont les neiges d'antan?" And the same lad knows the best translation ever made of that line—perhaps of any line in French poetry: "But where are the snows of yester-year?" Please, those of you who do not place much faith in my philological and even anti-dictionary method, note that *antan* is *ante annum* (accusatives are supposed to give color to things; what kind of Latin is this, anyway?), and how could you find a neater rendering than *yester-year?* Neat indeed, but not one bit gaudy. *Antan* is good and harsh and masculine, which is just what Villon wanted. *Yester-year* is soft and almost apologetic and feminine (its masculinity is only by virtue of a subsidiary accent).

Somehow the discussion has got into prosody, and perhaps that gives a hint as to what this is all about. What is style? Having got my courage up, I venture a definition. Style, I suspect, is a particular matter adorned by a suitable rhythm coupled with an appropriate melody.

When I speak of melody, I mean vowels. "O, to be wafted away . . ." such a line can begin nothing serious, for its iterative melody has the effect of a burlesque recitative. It could only be saved by a succession of variegated vowels coupled with dental consonants, which would be quite a trick; and anyway, that is not the way poets write poetry. To get back to translation: melody in style is the hardest thing to capture. How render "le moindre que j'en pourrais dire si je l'essayais sur ma lyre . . ."? Here is almost pure melody. Subject matter, nil; rhythm, a minimum.

So in translating one is thrown back onto subject and rhythm, with a hope one may substitute a melody not too inappropriate. But how about rhythm? That is a subtle matter. Poetic rhythm generally goes by rule. Only a Hopkins or a Shakespeare or a Milton can forget the rule. And being ordinarily artificial, poetic rhythm is best neglected. But prose rhythm is another thing. Meanings in any language can be lost by bad rhythm, and in English, which has few of the advantages of gender, which cannot be unparallel in construction without a sacrifice of clarity, one has to be particularly careful.

The problem is even more complex. French—and I believe German—can balance a sentence as long as a tapeworm without its falling apart. Which permits a subtlety or rhythm that is the despair of a speaker of English. The best the translator can do is to break up the long rhythmic pattern into a series of short patterns the totality of which will in some measure reproduce the original—or else, and very sparingly please, he may use the anacoluthon.

The long and short of all this is that rhythm is hard to reproduce, but one can make a stab at it. Melody is almost impossible. Meaning is the meat of the nut. And as for meaning, it is just a matter of working at it, and never being satisfied with the work—first to make sure you know what your author really *does* mean (here a knowledge of linguistics will help a lot more than the dictionary) and second that you render his meaning accurately and whole. For the greatest sin of all is to leave out what you find embarrassing to include. Never, never do that. Forget connectives if it please you; forget an occasional prepositional phrase. But that is the utmost limit. Remember always to respect your author.

So it all ends up like a business letter. Tell us what it means. That after all is the main job, and if you can hint at the style by a clever use of rhythm, good luck to you. Don't worry about the melody, unless it be your own English melody, which at a minimum must not offend.

"Who Came Dreaming from Plato"

You remembered his hands,
The easy and beautiful motion of them
Marking the graceful rise and descent of his sentences
And the voice intimate under the casually spoken Racine
And the thick rich syllables of Greek.

In South Bend, in St. Joseph County, in the commonwealth of Indiana,
During Better Business Week and shortly before the Slot Machine Distributors' Convention
This last of his generation talked and had wine with me
And the waitress thought he was nice
And the ancestral memory of the hat-check girl was vaguely stirred.

HENRY RAGO.

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Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

LOUIS ADAMIC has written a new book which I recommend with hearty good will for his main purpose, and with enthusiastic admiration for the rare skill of his literary art. ("From Many Lands." Louis Adamic. Harper. $3.50.) It is mainly a collection of true life stories, strictly matter-of-fact so far as the incidents related are concerned, drawn by Adamic from real immigrants in the United States, or the children of such immigrants.

Such stories have been written by many others, often by the persons chiefly concerned, and vary greatly in their readability, their literary qualities and their social values. Among such writers, Adamic strikes me as a unique genius in one of the most difficult and dangerous parts of journalism, that of interviewing people and reporting the results significantly; not didactically, but as an artist, and yet an artist not perverted by the practice of one of journalism's most evil habits, which is the pursuit and exploitation of sensational or exceptional characters and incidents for the sake of merely thrilling as many readerst as possible, and coincidentally enhancing the writer's professional pride and fattening his bank account. On the contrary, Louis Adamic, while possessing a highly developed personal and professional interest in the characters and experiences of the people he writes about, and fully equipped to express what he learns about them so as to produce absorbing stories and portraits and group pictures, follows a highly spiritual ideal both of American patriotism and of undeviating devotion to something even greater than national patriotism—devotion to humanity itself. Human brotherhood to him is not a mere phrase.

He not only believes it to be a reality in some sort of vague, other-worldly mystical fashion; he believes it to be the fundamental reality in international and national political and economic and religious interests, the true foundation of the United States. Its denial and repudiation elsewhere in the world are the main instruments of the evil forces of revolution and war; its neglect, so far as it has been practically neglected, in our own country (in our ways of life, tending to depart in practice from the spirit and guarantees of our fundamental institutions) he sees as the most menacing of our national problems.

So, being a hard-headed realist as well as a burning-hearted idealist, he long ago set himself a mighty task of research into the facts of our greatest national problem and of leading national education into feasible methods of dealing with such conditions as tend to undermine and destroy national unity among the vari-racial, multi-religious descendants or immigrants "from many lands" who are now the citizens, or the potential citizens, of the United States of America.

This book, tremendously important, and absorbingly interesting as it is in itself, is but the first volume of a series of works to be known as the Nation of Nations series. Moreover, Mr. Adamic is one of tbe moving spirits in the Common Council for American Unity, and the editor of its new periodical, known as *Common Ground,* devoted to the extensive educational purposes of the Council.

The address of both the magazine and the organization is 222 Fourth Avenue, which I give because it seems to me that our Catholic bishops and educational authorities and workers and all thoughtful American Catholic citizens should take both interest and a practical part in the work of Mr. Adamic and his associates. Many millions of American Catholics belong to the racial groups of which the characters studied in the book now under consideration are types, and if ever it was necessary for American Catholics of all our diverse racial and national stocks and cultures to participate fully and cooperatively with their fellow-citizens of other religious alliances and loyalties in frank recognition of the dangers that menace the nation, not only from outside but more immediately from the tensions and rivalries and even mutual hatreds that exist within our borders, most assuredly such action is imperatively necessary now.

In the dedicatory letter to his book, Louis Adamic puts his finger firmly upon one of the major weaknesses of our situation just as honestly as he fervently voices his faith in our ability to overcome our dangers—if we will it so and work in the right way to realize our will. As he says, once we have faced the facts, "we will realize that democracy even as we have it in the United States is far, far from what it should and could be; that the evil that seems to have engulfed Europe is not so much the creation of those who believe in lies and slavery as of those who, believing in truth and liberty, do not practice their belief, either not at all or with insufficient consistency, intelligence, passion and energy." As a result of recognizing this basic fault in ourselves, he hopes, "we—many of us—will want to correct this fault in ourselves and others, and become geared to the real motives and propulsions of our country—the same motives and propulsions, essentially, that were behind the successive waves of our immigration."

However, while here, and in the concluding chapters of the work, in the letters and documents and vital statistics, there is much material given for thoughtful, far-reaching consideration of the stark peril that faces our nation, it is the spirit, the life, the atmosphere of human courage, yes, and of faith, hope and charity emanating from human personalities drawn from the life in the main portion of the book which is by far its most commendable quality. Never has the total effect of a big book, abounding in details of misery, suffering, even degradation, been more buoyantly hopeful for its readers, because it portrays—rather, it conveys by a sort of participation—the inspiration uplifting so many real human beings who out of misery and suffering and at times degradation caused largely by others than themselves have triumphed, if not completely yet most considerably, as persons anyhow, over all such handicaps and limitations.

Of course, we also know that where these have won at least a partial victory, many others have gone down into the depths defeated; nevertheless, these individual victories point the way for the common victory of our community, if we but will it so, and work together, not merely dream.

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Communications

THE BLOCKADE PROBLEM

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: In THE COMMONWEAL for October 18 I am correctly named as one of those Americans advocating no relief from this country to conquered Belgium, France, Holland, Norway and Poland "without Britain's full and free consent," but some very faulty and what seem to me some very unfair deductions are made. It is not pleasant to anyone with a modicum of regard for ordinary decency, let alone anyone who professes Catholic Christianity, to be accused, even by implication, of seeking to withhold food and medical supplies from millions of starving and suffering fellow human beings, including helpless children and helpless infants. Believe it or not, I shudder as much as anybody at human misery and distress, at infantile undernourishment and death by starvation. I really do not approve of the slaughter of innocents. I leave such sadistic enterprise to Herod and Nero—and to Hitler.

If I had believed that we Americans could actually help the victims of nazi Germany by shipping supplies to them, I would not have signed the manifesto; and if and when the situation so changes as to make it probable that we can actually help them, I shall gladly recant and join in the crusade to dispatch food and clothing and medicine and nurses to Norway and Holland, Belgium and France, Poland and Germany too. Right now, however, and so long as nazi Germany is on the rampage, terrorizing all her neighbors and exploiting them to wage unrelenting and totalitarian war against the civilian as well as the armed forces of any power that refuses to bow the knee, I don't, for the life of me, see how any American can reasonably suppose that supplies which we might send to the conquered regions of Europe would be used for actual relief of the victims in those regions. Such supplies would simply be appropriated by the nazi régime. They would be utilized to strengthen and prolong the victimizing and degradation and slow starvation of the liberty-loving peoples of Norway, Holland, Belgium, France and Poland. The only real relief that I can foresee for these people is to relieve them of the cause of their miseries, and that can be done only by force of arms, by military setback to Germany and downfall of Hitler. This herculean task, for the moment, is Great Britain's alone, and whatever one may think of British wickedness or stupidity in the past (and I for one am pretty censorious about it), the fact remains that right now in the single front-line defense of Irish freedom, of American freedom, of South America's freedom, of the future freedom of Europe, is Great Britain. On Britain, therefore, should be concentrated all the relief, all manner of the relief, that we can give. It is the surest and quickest way of bringing ultimate and substantial relief to the whole of agonized Europe.

I know that ex-President Hoover has been saying that inasmuch as Germany let him feed the Belgians during the World War, Germany would let another American Relief Commission feed all the conquered peoples in the present war. Like multitudes of my fellow citizens I have the greatest respect for Mr. Hoover, for his humanitarian impulses and his organizing ability; and I have no doubt that Herr Hitler would pledge his government most solemnly, by sworn treaty if suggested and on a stack of Bibles if available, not to touch a sack of flour or a pair of shoes or an ounce of quinine destined for a Belgian, a Frenchman, or a Pole. I wonder, however, if Mr. Hoover and those Americans who share his benevolent optimism have not allowed their hearts to supplant their heads and neglected to ponder the central fact about all of Herr Hitler's "pledges." He makes them but to break them, and while he makes them for effect upon someone else he breaks them for advantage to himself. One might have questioned whether he really intended to pursue this extraordinary technique when he adumbrated it several years ago in *Mein Kampf* and even after he had become adept in its use, some naïve people like Neville Chamberlain could still honestly imagine an exceptional case in which Der Fuehrer would tell the truth and stick to it. Since Munich, however, there has been no exception; and by now it should have become abundantly clear that Herr Hitler is the perfect cross between Machiavelli and Baron Munchausen. Let not Mr. Hoover and his sympathizers confuse the present nazi régime in Germany with the Hohenzollern régime there during the World War. William II, according to his lights, was a Christian with some regard for the good opinion of mankind. Hitler is anti-Christian and insanely self-centered.

If one believes that evil should not be resisted and combatted, one may logically be pacifist. But when have Catholics entertained such a belief or when have they acted upon it? To my way of thinking it is one of the great glories of Catholicism that it has inspired generation after generation of its adherents to take arms and risk health, and life itself, to assert and maintain the rights of man and his God-implanted strivings for justice and liberty. Is it necessary to remind Catholics in America that there are moral and spiritual ends to be served far higher and more imperious than physical needs for food and clothing and medicine? I am profoundly convinced that the present war is like to no other of the past and that its stakes are of a different and more crucial order. If only it can be fought through to the succor of justice and liberty against engulfing injustice and slavery, then "all other things will be added" and relief of body will follow relief of soul. It is because I do not believe that this process can or should be reversed that I have united with other Americans in counselling an embargo on the shipment of supplies to countries seized and dominated by nazi Germany.

CARLTON J. H. HAYES.

DECISIVE BATTLES

Elmira, N. Y.

TO the Editors: This refers to a letter of Mr. Curran in the issue of September 6. This is a time when we should not allow waves of emotion caused by the horrors of war to sweep us off the rock of reason and Revelation. For that reason I am taking exception to two statements made by Mr. Curran: (1) War is essentially wrong.

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(2) Nothing good can ever result from war. Both statements are false; the first because it contradicts Catholic teaching, tradition and practice, the second because it is contradicted by the facts of history.

(1) In the Old Testament war is not only approved but commanded, either as an instrument of Divine justice to punish wrongdoing, or as an instrument to defend religion, justice or the liberty of the state. So much for Revelation. For reason: what is essentially wrong (wrong from its very nature) is an evil *per se,* and can never be justified by cause, motive or circumstance.

In the New Covenant it has been constant Catholic teaching that there can be a just war. The point needs no elaboration. It is manifest to every student of history or theology. Some of the greatest saints in the calendar have not only approved war, but have exhorted and encouraged Christian people to make war: for instance, Saint Bernard and Pope Saint Pius V. King Saint Ferdinand of Spain is honored for pushing forward the *Reconquista* which, when concluded, made Spain a Christian nation. Another Spanish saint, Saint Herminigildus, a convert, was prepared to take up the sword against his own father, a persecuting Arian Goth; and he has the distinction of being lauded in a panegyric by the greatest saint, statesman and peacemaker (not pacifist) of the early Middle Ages, Pope Saint Gregory the Great.

(2) The second statement is equally false. Did nothing good result from the battle of Lepanto? Saint Pius did not think so. "He had worked incessantly to unite the Christian princes against the hereditary enemy." He did not succeed with all of them. But "he never rested till he united the forces of Venice, Spain and the Holy See." The victory of Lepanto was due primarily to him. Did he think that nothing good came from it? On the contrary, in perpetual thanksgiving he established the Feast of the Holy Rosary. We still celebrate the victory on that day. And that reminds me: the day I write, September 12, we are celebrating the feast of the Name of Mary established by another saintly Pope, Innocent XI, to commemorate for all time the victory over the Turks at Vienna on that date in 1683. The victory was due primarily to "Innocent's earnest and incessant exhortations" to the Christian princes to unite, and among the most honored names in the history of Poland is that of King John Sobieski who had responded to the Pope's exhortation and acted as commander-in-chief. In an earlier war against the Turk, there was one loud voice in Europe that denounced the war—the voice of Martin Luther. The Turk should not be resisted, he said; he is a scourge of God for your sins; on which a Protestant historian has commented: "A very convenient doctrine to preach *at a safe distance from the Turk.*" The gentle and peaceful Cardinal Newman has explained for us at great length the character of the Ottoman Turk, the menace he was to Christian Europe, and *the duty it was* to make war against him. Much good can result from war.

If Spain had remained a Mohammedan state in the West, and if the Christians of Eastern Europe had preached "pacifism" and preferred to gain the martyred crown when the Turk had overrun Hungary and was battering at the walls of Vienna and Belgrade, what would have become of Christian Europe caught between two Mohammedan Empires? We boast about our Western Civilization; but we too often forget to what and to whom we owe it. And many of our propagandists today take good care not to call it Christian or Catholic but "Western"—as if it had fallen from the sky or sprung from the earth, and was not due to the historical forces which developed and saved it. It is truly in a bad state today; but its condition is due precisely to the causes denounced by those saintly Popes and Catholic warriors—that the Christian princes (I use this word in the Bellocian sense), instead of uniting against the common enemy, have for 400 years been making war on each other.

This will, I fear, appear prolix; but I have no apology to offer for its prolixity. The matter is too serious. For the past decade it has been painful to read what some English and American Catholic pacifists have written on this subject—good Catholics otherwise, sincere and zealous—especially painful to note their arguments: "Christ told Peter to put the sword in the scabbard" . . . Since I began seven years ago to send an occasional article to the Catholic press, I have received a stack of letters in that strain, to correct me. One gentleman, after quoting the case of Peter and other isolated passages from Scripture, clinched his arguments by telling me the American Bishops had recommended *prayers* for Mexico. If they had believed that war was not essentially wrong, they would have recommended Mexican Catholics to make war on their prosecutors! This thing of quoting isolated texts of Scripture to support our whimsical emotions and sentimentality is not Catholic. It came only after fifteen centuries. We see the result in the chaos of today. Our Savior has left us a better way to know His will and teaching. Let us keep our feet on the rock, the rock of reason and Revelation as interpreted in the teaching, tradition and practice of nineteen centuries.

Rev. Owen B. McGuire.

BOOK WEEK

Boston, Mass.

To the Editors: The Catholic Literary Guild of Boston will sponsor its fourth annual Catholic Book Week in Boston during the week of November 3 to 10. As in former years, the week will be observed by exhibits of books and posters in the libraries and book-stores throughout Boston and by a series of lectures by Catholic authors. Through the courtesy of the Director of the Boston Public Library, the main book exhibit and the lecture series will be held in the Library's central building in Copley Square. In connection with the observance of Catholic Book Week, the Guild has compiled an annotated bibliography of recent books by Catholic authors, which will supplement the basic bibliography of Catholic books prepared by the Guild for the observance of previous Catholic Book Weeks. The membership of the Guild is composed of young Catholic lay people of greater Boston, headed by Mr. Leonard Freiberg, President.

Eleanor Devlin,
Recording Secretary.

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The Stage & Screen

Gilbert and Sullivan

THE LYRIC OPERA COMPANY certainly deserves encouragement; it has the best chorus I have ever heard in a Gilbert and Sullivan company, and it has several promising principals. Walter Tibbetts has a magnificent voice which he knows how to use, has presence and authority. His Mikado lacks humor, but is dynamic and macabre, and he gives an admirable enactment of the Pirate King. Mr. Tibbetts has the distinction without which, while a singer may be Sullivan, he is not Gilbert. Robert Eccles, too, proves by his Poo-Bah and his Sergeant of Police that he has the veritable Gilbertian spirit. He is the best comedian in the company, and ought to increase in unctiousness as he increases in experience. There is an excellent Katisha in Catherine Judah, and three serviceable tenors in Allan Stewart, Carlton Bentley and Charles Latterner. Robert Kierman is apparently chosen as the chief comedian, for he plays Ko-Ko and the Major General, the latter very much more successfully than the former. The weakness of the company among the principals is on the distaff side. The only one of the young women who seems to have the Gilbertian spirit—she has not yet been given the opportunity to show if she has the voice—is Ellen Merrill, who in the small part of Isabel in "The Pirates" acts with a charm, a vivacity and an expression which indicate that she may prove the company's real Yum-Yum. The best thing the company has done so far is "Trial by Jury," the poorest "The Gondoliers." In the former the chorus not only sings superbly, but its individual members show that each one is an actor. The impresario and musical director is Joseph S. Daltry, and if sometimes there is a slight lack of vigor in the orchestra, he must be praised for training the admirable chorus, and directing its ensembles with a spirit which is rare in operetta choral work. Mr. Daltry, when he has strengthened his leading women singers and has taught one or two of the others, including Mr. Latterner, that English well pronounced is a necessity in Gilbert and Sullivan, will have a company of which he may well be proud. *(At the Forty-fourth Street Theatre.)*

It Happens on Ice

THE CENTER THEATRE has now been turned, at least the stage part of it, into an ice rink, and every night you may see there the world's greatest skaters, minus Sonja Heinie, who produces the show. There is Hedi Stenuf from Vienna, a veritable Pavlowa of the ice, and Lloyd Baxter, a veritable Nijinsky; the Caley Sisters, each one lovelier and more skilful than the other, and Mary Jane Yeo, only sixteen, and as lovely again; and La Verne, and Jo Ann Dean, Gene Berg, and Dr. A. Douglas Nelles, and the Four Bruises. For an hour they will enchant you, even if after that a slight monotony may succeed. And there is also, and not on skates, Joe Cook, who tries hard to be funny with somewhat indifferent material, and thanks to his extraordinary talent even succeeds. The scenery, costumes and lighting are by Norman Bel Geddes, and exquisite they are. There are also songs and music from an orchestra. For the first hour "It Happens on Ice" is stupendous; after that it depends on your taste for skating. *(At the Center Theatre.)*

GRENVILLE VERNON.

They All Know What They Want

IT WAS inevitable that John Ford, master director of mood and character, and Eugene O'Neill, master dramatist of sea and character, should get together and make a great movie. Their union is *"The Long Voyage Home,"* a work of art in cinema technique of the changeless sea and the little men who try to master it. Using Dudley Nichols' fine script and beautiful photography of well-lighted sets, this Walter Wanger production portrays the voyage of the *S.S. Glencairn* from the West Indies, where the character of the crew is immediately revealed in a rough brawl, through the stormy sea, through the war zone, and finally to England. But England is not their home; the sea is home. As the waves dash right into the camera and as the men react to their own lonely world, you feel and smell the water and know these men who are ruled by that old devil sea. To offset the film's major fault, its episodic quality due to the script's being made of four O'Neill one-act plays, Ford has given the whole a unity through an excellently sustained atmosphere by keeping his characterizations consistent and by using imagination in visualizing the universality of O'Neill's prose. The tough mugs of the sailors in bravery and brawling are contrasted with their soft sentimentality as they respond to Yank's long drawn-out death scene, or the wrong they have done Smitty, or their mother-bossing Ole on his way to a farm in Sweden. Because Ford puts up with no Hollywood glamor, he has been able to get outstanding performances out of his carefully-chosen cast: Thomas Mitchell, a hard, sweet-sour Irishman; John Wayne, a simple Swede; Ian Hunter, a well-born Englishman soaking his past in drink; Barry Fitzgerald, a cocky steward; John Qualen, a wide-eyed, mournful Norwegian; Wilfrid Lawson, the hard, wise captain; Ward Bond, Joseph Sawyer. These seamen think they know life and what they want, but they belong to the sea and to the sea they return.

Cinema has drawn on the stage for another picture this week in making a new version of Sidney Howard's *"They Knew What They Wanted."* In this Erich Pommer production, Robert Ardrey's script has changed the Howard play, but has retained the spirit of the original drama, and Garson Kanin's intelligent direction has resulted in a poignant, sincere, adult film about three people who seem pathetically dumb and helpless but who are real people who know what they want. Big-hearted, inarticulate, artless Italian Tony (a much different Charles Laughton in a sympathetic rôle in which he tends to overact, but is emotionally moving) wants a wife and family on his California grape ranch. Handsome, hard-shelled, seductive Foreman Joe (William Gargan proving in this restrained performance, which might have been funny if it hadn't

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been right, that he shouldn't be confined to B pictures) doesn't want marriage 'cause he doesn't "owe no man nothing—or no woman." Weary, on the defensive, Waitress Amy (Carole Lombard showing again that she isn't just a blond chit in comedies) wants a home of her own, a regular place—and if "her husband wants kids, that's okay." So Tony wins Amy—by correspondence and with Joe's picture. And Amy comes to the ranch. Joe knows what he wants and Tony's accident the night before the wedding gives Joe the opportunity. Kanin's direction of this tense drama points up its human qualities, and his use of the camera as a participant intensifies the excitement. Frank Fay, excellent as the understanding, friendly priest who loves and guides Tony, acts in a kind of Greek chorus capacity.

Broadway's George Abbott, who has never been overly fond of the way his productions are treated in Hollywood (and neither has anyone else), said he'd "show 'em" if they gave him a free hand with a picture. And "show 'em" he does. Using his last season's hit musical, *"Too Many Girls,"* Abbott has produced and directed a swift little picture that is amusingly diverting. Knowing that the pointless plot is of least importance, Abbott pays little attention to John Twist's screenplay, but lets his able cast punch the snappy lines (a little too snappy in some cases; leave the children at home) and sing the tuneful Rodgers and Hart songs so you can hear the clever lyrics while the boys and girls dance their merry way through gay numbers. Although not well versed in movie technique (his field creaks with staginess) Abbott knowns that the successful musical comedy leaves the audience crying for more. When the picture finishes you could easily stand more of Hal LeRoy's and Ann Miller's dancing, Frances Langford's singing, the finale led by Desi Arnaz, the typical campus satire, without classes of course, but with a football team that consists of "a bunch of heroes in the raw," and even the Lucille Ball and Richard Carlson romance which doesn't get in the way of the fun at old Pottawatomie ("you'll make a lota me"). And you could take a lot more of Eddie Bracken's fresh sense of humor—best exhibited in his clowning of "I Didn't Know What Time It Was." I hope Hollywood doesn't spoil him.

Of particular interest to Irish-Americans is a new feature-length travel film, *"Here Is Ireland."* Its vivid color gives a rather glossy impression of picture-book Ireland, but Eire is that kind of dream country, with unbelievable beauties. Its hedges and lakes and cemeteries and churches; its very place names, as Pat Stanton's running commentary describes the tour, are poetry. The Kerry Coast, First Communion Day in Cork, the lovely countryside at Youghal, Bantry, Killarney, Adare, Croagh—where the Irish will one day gather so Saint Patrick can judge them—Knock, Donegal Town. Then in Northern Ireland too, Strabone, the Giants' Causeway, Bushmill's Distillery, the Antrim Coast Road, Armagh, and, down the banks of the River Boyne, to Dublin, where we see many of its famous citizens as Douglas Hyde and Eamon De Valera and also its shrines and horse show, then back to Cork to see a great profession of faith in the Corpus Christi procession. Since the film did not see fit to include the stark realities of the Aran Islands, I am glad it did show some of Eire's modern buildings: a power plant, churches and the new apartment houses under Government supervision. What the picture lacks through its unimaginative editing and fading sound track it makes up for in its generous portions of superb scenery and the enthusiasm of an approving audience.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Intellectual Tragedy

By G. A. BRIEFS

THIS BOOK* is interesting in more than one way. It offers the outline of a political sociology extracted from observation of present day events and developments. Moreover, it has a personal significance in so far as it presents a reconsideration of position coming from a liberal-minded Marxian socialist. Finally, the book presents an analysis of the mass state evolving in Russia and nazi Germany, and, to a lesser extent, in Italy.

One may reduce the book to its essentials by stating that Lederer emphatically rejects the idea of a classless society, as Marxism and other forms of socialism had envisioned it; the author rejects implicitly and explicitly Russian bolshevism and, of course, fascism and nazism: they all are types of a classless structure, or intend to be such. Our socialist longing for the classless state was an error. European experience opened our eyes. Life is not worth living under such an order; progress is inhibited, freedom is lost, violence and bureaucrats rule. Society must be stratified; social groups and classes must be its strata. Society develops and evolves in the conflict of social group and class interests. The variety and struggle of interests and ideas is the lifeblood of society, it gives to society its shape and form and growth. Indeed, "as a socialist and a valiant anti-fascist, the author discovers the social value of classes and differentiation into group life." (Dr. Speier, in the preface.)

A liberal-minded socialist discovers the utopian element in Marx: a classless society is incompatible with freedom. Marx had assumed that only a classless society could achieve freedom for each and all. Lederer was historically more fortunate. He could observe what the attempt toward a classless socialist society costs in other values: it costs the destruction of society without a compensating economic success. Hence the retraction.

The rise of the mass state led by a dictator and his henchmen has destroyed democracy. The rise of the masses to exclusive political power is an event "unprecedented in history." The mass state wipes out the social stratification or at least blurs it. Masses are emotional; their emotions indeed make them a unit of some sort, a unit desirous for action and waiting only for the emotional mass leader, the great catalyst who releases the dynamite slumbering in the masses. In all recorded history social or political groups have superseded other social or political groups (hence Pareto's remark that history is the cemetery of élites). But under our very

* State of the Masses, *Emil Lederer*. Norton. $2.50.

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eyes something perfectly new occurred: the masses have risen to power desirous to destroy all social differentiation. The modern mass state destroyed society, it dissolved social groups, it suppressed their freedom and their articulation. A crowd-psyche lives in such a state; therefore no normalization of life is possible. The mass state has to keep on defining enemies, be they within or without the country, and scoring victories that command new mass exaltations. Lederer predicts the inherent urge of the mass state to disrupt the existing political system of Europe and of the world, even at the risk of plunging the world into another Armageddon. The political expansion would play into the hands of a huge bureaucratic machine wielding arbitrary power over the subjugated nations. This vast machine will constantly grow, it may cause a transformation of the state, in which the masses would gradually be lost to sight. National socialism would then "be an abstract power cut even from its original source." But where would it go from there?—"This question cannot be answered." However one thing is sure. The coming struggle will not mean a fight for democracy but for something more concrete: "for the existence of society and private life." If it is too late for this struggle, the world is heading for another age of slavery.

It seems to me that Mr. Lederer should have distinguished between social stratification and class society. A class society is built up from fighting classes virtually and often explicitly refusing just this *convivium* with the other class or classes; whereas a merely stratified society built upon social groups of other than class character truly meets the requirements of a society; here the groups willingly cooperate toward a common good. Thus medieval society was certainly stratified, but it was no class society. It is one of Marx's—and his followers'—many arbitrary interpretations of history to see in any form of social stratification the expression of a class society and of class war. Hence the grotesque statement of the "Communist Manifesto" that the history of all society is the history of class war. Lederer, by missing the distinction between class society and stratified society, ultimately has to praise the nineteenth century society of liberal capitalism, tempered by unions and social legislation. Thus he fails to recognize that our modern mass state precisely emerged therefrom. The nineteenth century pulverized and disintegrated the remnants of the stratification and social order of the past; it undermined the social ethics on which Western civilization fundamentally rests; it "massified" Western man and made him a market commodity and a holder of precarious jobs; and thus it paved the road for the rebellion of the masses—and for their submission of fakirs and *condottieri* who claimed to know the trick of establishing jobs and security.

I disagree with the author's main thesis that the characteristic feature of fascism (in the broadest meaning of the word) is the mass, and that therefore the fascist states are mass states. I would rather say that fascism developed the political and administrative technique to conquer and to bridle the masses and to escape the danger of anarchic disintegration slumbering in the masses. Fascism in a way "fooled" the masses, using the technique to which they responded, and then ruled them with an iron rod. National socialism reconstructed a society in agony by organizing it under a strictly military pattern and by shaping the life of a nation in accordance with life in the barracks. Veterans of the World War, gone mad over war as the spring of strength, the source of all virtues, conceived the idea of which even the Grand Elector and Frederick II did not dream: to politicize the life of their nation (or "subjects") in its total entirety and to militarize it in all its ramifications. There is method in this madness, and it has a long history in Prussia. The truly grotesque feature of nazism lies right here; in the attempt to put a whole modern nation on permanent parade and marching orders from the cradle to the cemetery. Was not military organization always successful in Prussian history? Was not the greatness of Prussia (and its "extension," Germany, since 1870) built on the army? There was a strong appeal in this argument. To it largely responded German youth, to it responded most German professors, to this appeal responded the German employer, who always was convinced that a plant should be run like a barracks, with authority on the one side and strict obedience and mute submission on the other. The *Virus Borussicus* had permeated the whole of German life so that when social life got into an impasse under the Republic after 1929, certain leading groups and social forces fell back upon their traditional spirit, upon the inner conviction that you can solve every problem by militarizing the nation. This implied the perversion of a great virtue the German people have, their love for order. When nazism sounded their "leitmotif" of order by military organization, vast groups in the nation nodded consent: the idealists among the youth, the professors, the employers, the middle classes in town and city—and surprisingly many workers of long union and good Marxian standing. The German nation fell easy victim not of a sort of political accident or short circuit in 1933, it fell victim of a populist "barrack-Prussianism." The truly aristocratic features of the old Prussia had become extinct or repressed in their development, particularly after 1870; and only the plebeian barrack aspect of it survived. Therein lies the deepest root of the German tragedy—everything else is only *le petit côté de la chose*. In spite of many excellent remarks and observations, Lederer misses the depth of the problem. He misses the point that the German nation was morally defeated by Prussia and fell the first victim of nazism—which is nothing but the adaptation of a populist Prussianism to the conditions of a mass age in agony.

One more remark. Several times Lederer expresses his surprise concerning the trend things took in Europe and in Germany in particular; he repeats again that nobody could have foreseen that the masses would rise, that dictatorship would ensue. . . . I am sorry I cannot agree with Lederer. A whole array of writers during the nineteenth century predicted *verbatim* what would happen in Europe; we mention but a few such: de Maistre, de Bonald, Donoso Cortes, J. Burckhardt, Nietzsche—not to mention the dread anticipations of historians like Tocqueville and

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Dilthey. None of these writers argued from the basis of "scientific socialism": they all argued from the basis of political philosophy of old and from their knowledge of the human heart.

And they proved far more correct than Marx. Lederer realizes the utopian element in Marx, but he does not realise how deeply Marx was permeated with the tenets of the eighteenth century Enlightenment and with Hegelian *gnosis*. Here lie the *prota pseude* of all our modern interpreters and predictors of history. Neither the philosophers of the Enlightenment nor Hegel could tell them reliably the truth about *what man is,* to what order of being he belongs, and what is the ultimate end of his life. Scientists had, as Lederer explains in a brilliant section, failed to do their part; they retrenched themselves behind the subjectivity of all value-judgments (Max Weber!) and thus delivered the political and social reality to the new Caesars; the scientists "forfeited all right to be heard or respected and found themselves, in the period of upheaval in which we live, in the rear guard of those who applauded their own humiliation and destruction." True, all too true.

More Books of the Week

The Game of History

Dictionary of American History. Editor in Chief, James Truslow Adams; Managing Editor, R. V. Coleman. 6 *Volumes. Scribner's.* $60.00.
An Encyclopedia of World History. Edited by William L. Langer. Houghton. $5.50.
Historical Tables. S. H. Steinberg. Macmillan. $3.50.

IT IS almost impossible to review compendiums like these three because the very effort makes the reviewer look at the books in a way they are not intended to be looked at, and in a way practically no one else will ever have occasion to do. They are reference works, and these three are unquestionably of a high order. They are a sign of the times too, encouraging in that they indicate great historical awareness among the public and great factual and managerial ability among scholars and publishers, and discouraging in that they can be interpreted as a symbol of contemporary inability, or lesser interest, in trying to perform the more arduous and philosophic task of organizing and integrating the vast knowledge at our disposal. They are aids to creative historical work, or else just Information Please bibles, full of scattered and interesting facts for entertainment, depending upon why and how you read them.

The Scribner's "Dictionary of American History" is a very large scale project indeed, and one that has not before been undertaken. An advisory council of seventeen eminent historians and more than a thousand expert contributors have collaborated over a period of four years to produce this comprehensive fact book of American history. Places, movements, business enterprises, riots, wars (there is an amazing amount of violence in this record of our past), sports, inventions, institutions, crafts, etc., etc. (*etc.,* but not people), are all dealt with in proper alphabetical place and with almost innumerable cross references. Assembling the work was a colossal editorial and administrative job, which the foreword describes in a very interesting fashion. In a way, it marks about the peak of the industrial method of strictly American antiquarian and historical scholarship. There it is, an undoubtedly most useful book of reference, all the items written up competently, and among the entries, certainly hundreds about which one might wish to debate as they involve implications and interpretations.

The general policy appears to be to give the subject to a specialist in the field who is "pro." There is a definitely "institutional" atmosphere as opposed to "muckraking." This is not meant necessarily to imply dullness in writing or stuffiness in overlooking non-academic themes. The content is big and well-rounded, and the writing clear, concise and for the most part interesting. But it is not very critical, and the presentation of subjects frequently fails to raise or hint at questions which any symposium of informed students of the matters would undoubtedly have to debate at length. A kind of impartiality is produced by a like kindliness of attitude toward different subjects for which kindliness would have to arise from different and even contradictory viewpoints. But a radical, or even a restless, person will find the Dictionary distinctly conservative socially. A "smart" encyclopedia would have been intolerable, but soundness need no longer be measured exclusively by the gold standard. Still, readers of all sorts will find it convenient and interesting to look up any variety of American historical incidents and "things" in this excellent new work, and to obtain from it material which is agreeably and conscientiously presented for their own knowledge, interpretation and use. The last volume, the index, is not yet out.

The "Encyclopedia of World History," edited by Professor Langer and embodying the collaboration of many scholars, is a revised and modernized version of Ploetz's "Epitome." It is arranged on the general basis of chronology and region or nation. Treating, presumably, all human history from the not very high paleolithic to the annihilation of the Czechoslovak State, it is surprising how personal a work it turns out to be. It does not give simply the "consensus" judgments on many episodes and events and trends which divide schools. The continuity of the story by itself is a judgment against philosophers of history who see in man's record different distinctive cultures, and against anthropologists who do not go the whole way with the diffusionist school, and against scientists and philosophers who find an essential difference between man and earlier animals. The emphasis is, of course, also the author's: the selection of the number of dates to record things under, and the things recorded under those chosen. As a book to read through, this is controversial in the way that even a scholarly and non-theoretic history book must be, even though it is, thereby, more lively than books primarily of dates are expected to be.

The historical events recorded are deliberately and rather strictly restricted to the public political, diplomatic and military happenings about which descriptive and chronological definiteness can be most closely approximated. Periods alive with other cultural developments (such, for instance, as the Athenian, Elizabethan, etc.) which are harder to epitomize are indicated by short paragraph résumés, and by a multiplication of the "political" entries of the times, even though those entries do not record events very important in themselves. This method is perhaps indirect, but well done and one with no easy substitute. The old "Ploetz" was a very standard

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reference volume, and Professor Langer's modernized version will undoubtedly continue its popularity now when new historical knowledge and new interests demand revision.

The "Historical Tables" of S. H. Steinberg, which Macmillan published in America late in the spring, attempts to overcome the limitation which the Ploetz-Langer and other chronologies suffer by staying as close to politics and war as they do. Each pair of pages is divided into six columns. From the ninth century up to 1914, the columns treat: (1) Western Europe; (2) Central Europe; (3) Eastern Europe, Islam, Asia or Overseas; (4) Ecclesiastical History up to 1657 and Constitutional History later; (5) Constitutional and Economic History and then Economic History and Natural Science; (6) Cultural Life. It is an interesting arrangement, which, while it necessitates extreme brevity, does provide a tool for broadening one's historical proportions. The listings are so brief that they are titles and not descriptions or explanations. The Tables are not articulated into periods and not chained together as a running outline, and no attempt at any sort of integration can come from them, except through the divisions of the pages listed above. It is a unitary book, giving increasing space to happenings as the present is approached and prepared chiefly for British and American students. It performs a definitely useful service in forcing an inquirer who looks up a certain event concerning one place and one sphere of interest to notice almost automatically the contemporary happenings in at least six divisions of interest.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

BIOGRAPHY

Queen Elizabeth. Theodore Maynard. Bruce. $4.00.

THOSE of us who are conscious, ever since the appearance of "Apostle of Charity," that in Theodore Maynard the English-speaking Church has simply the best biographer of our time have awaited his study of Queen Elizabeth with considerable interest. It is pleasant to report that one is rather richly rewarded for his hopes. Dr. Maynard, as everyone knows, is a distinguished Catholic poet, and not every poet makes an equally interesting writer of objective prose. Yet Mr. Maynard's "Queen Elizabeth" is almost a model of what the study of such a figure ought to be and seldom is—careful, scholarly, humorous, neatly written, refreshingly devoid of eloquence and frills.

For an historian of any shade of belief, or of none at all, Queen Elizabeth presents a rather complex problem in biography; for the Catholic she presents, as a famous persecutor of the Church, an exceptionally delicate one. She was a true child of the renaissance; and the renaissance was, by its very nature, international; yet she has become the symbol of one of the most insolent forms of nationalism ever known before the advent of Hitler. Born a Catholic and conforming ostentatiously during her half-sister's reign, nursing throughout her own a strongly Catholic "taste" in religion, she became (with her contemporary, John Knox, whom she could not abide) the most formidable persecutor of the Church before our time. It is an unhappy fact that a comparison between Gloriana's government and that of the Austrian paper-hanger is often cruelly inevitable. With the exception of a few great lords and ladies, the fate of the English Catholics under Elizabeth was pretty much the same as that of the Jews in Hitler-occupied countries today. They were systematically disqualified, impoverished and, in many instances, tortured to death. Finally, in Elizabeth's personal case, she remained a technical virgin; yet her odd psychology was further complicated by an abberation called by Mr. Belloc "lascivious impotence"—though how Mr. Belloc knows, we cannot imagine.

Now it is very greatly to Mr. Maynard's credit, as a Catholic historian, that he steers his way carefully and good-humoredly between the Scylla of those Catholics who hold that Elizabeth was a species of monster, a Gorgon, and the Charybdis of those non-Catholics who maintain that she was simply the most wonderful and admirable woman in history. In spite of her faults, as he says himself, "he likes and admires her." Unlike Belloc, he admires her (in certain respects) as a sovereign, while it is impossible not to be captivated by her (again in some respects) as a woman, a "character." Yet, as a matter of simple history, Elizabeth was a liar, a hypocrite, a bit of a wanton, and the murderess of her prisoner. It is quite a dilemma. But our author evades the dilemma by reminding his readers that Elizabeth was also a genius; and "according to one large group of psychiatrists, genius is the fruit of neurosis." To deny her neurosis is only to accentuate her guilt; and this is what Mr. Maynard does not desire to do. "Truth, in any case, must be served."

Truth is well served by him in this instance because he places himself at the precise point where truth is usually to be found—the middle one between two extremes. He refuses to range himself with certain fellow-Catholics and dabblers, for whom the name and person of Elizabeth are too often targets of mere abuse. No indeed; he likes and admires her. On the other hand, he refuses to join in that cloying hyperdulia which is by no means limited to Elizabeth's contemporaries, Mr. Chamberlain being a good modern example. He declines to exaggerate luridly the case of Mary Queen of Scots who, with all her good qualities, was an *intriguante* and indifferent Catholic, though she died honorably for that religion. Finally he refuses to adopt that third and most insulting attitude toward Elizabeth invented by Mr. Belloc, namely, that she exercised no personal power at all, but was led about on a rope by her foreign minister Cecil, who forced her into each of her actions, from the establishment of the Anglican Church to the execution of Mary Stuart. Of all tiresome and disingenuous legends, that one, with its allusions to "poor woman, unfortunate woman, unhappy Elizabeth," is most boring.

Elizabeth was not a kind of half-witted puppet in the hands of a plutocratic gang, but an exceedingly strong personality who usually knew what she wanted, and usually got it. If she had wanted Catholicism, for instance, one can be very sure that there would have been no Anglican Settlement. Despite her unhappy sexual life, and the tragic fiasco of her friendship with Essex at the end of her long reign, she had her reward, at least in this world. Whether she has it in the next must be left to historians like Mr. Belloc (or even like Mr. Maynard, who permits a bit of them to creep into his last chapter) whose history is marred by metaphysical preoccupations.

CUTHBERT WRIGHT.

Hugh Young: A Surgeon's Autobiography. Harcourt. $5.00.

HE CAME by it naturally. His grandfather, with the one shot he had, broke the jaw of the bear that would otherwise have chewed him up, and then, when

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in the desert parched with thirst, killed a buffalo and from its stomach drank a liquid "which he assured me was pure and palatable." That is the kind of story that can be written down without one's being a cripple, and when it is told by a man who began life by drinking enough whiskey to make him "keep up a perfect carnival of noise and merriment," what are you going to do? His whole life has been a carnival, even the serious, creative part of it.

Young in name and young in heart;
Old in science, old in art;
God defend us from the slaughter
He creates 'twixt wind and water.

He has always been the same, full of irresistible dash, tinted with boyish indiscretion. Admire him or not as you will; that would be the least of his troubles: you can't help loving him.

Much of his book is just good fellowship, peculiarly the chapter on "Bob"; much of it is utterly urological and not required reading for young ladies. The former will interest his friends, the latter his professional associates; but the interest of the book to any man is that part where Hugh's charm best shows: the early chapters about his boyhood in Texas, his youth at Charlottesville, his medical beginnings at Baltimore, where he first put up at a hotel recommended by a negro hack driver.

For many a year now he has come near being Baltimore's most valuable citizen. And the stories he can tell! The first state sanitarium for tuberculosis (when even "Popsy" Welch had given up hope), the first state hospital for the insane, killing the prohibition bill, the school of engineering and all that that meant, the municipal hospital, presidency of the state medical society and the boat-ride thereunto, the aviation commission, the purse net bill, the Potomac River bridge, the luncheon to Anthony Eden—to patch up a family quarrel three generations old—the first naval battle in American waters.

Including the stories, he gives one hundred and thirty pages to the war—a cootie-ridden, venereal, AWOL yarn; and at that he omits some of the splendor of his entry into Metz ahead of the French. With almost a recording angel's tear he blots the adjectives from Colonel Wadham's observations about the little trip to the Army of Occupation; and he omits, too, the perhaps-apocryphal but immortal remark of Colonel Patterson, "What, a German spy in the uniform of an American medical colonel? Huh! Crile with the British; Cushing in Paris—it must be Hugh Young."

It was. It was always Hugh Young. That seductive man Young, as Bolton Bangs used to call him. But he is more than that. The "Brady," the Lord Baltimore portraits, the colonial documents, the National Health Institute, the war memorial, the Museum of Art, the Lyric Theater, the Opera Club, the Baltimore Club, the Aviation Commission, the Yacht Club—and many a poor old man on bended knees, thankful to God and to Hugh Young.

Young in name and young in heart—but I begin to repeat.

E. L. KEYES.

FICTION

You Can't Go Home Again. Thomas Wolfe. Harpers. $3.00.

THOMAS WOLFE'S last novel ranks immediately after his first one, "Look Homeward, Angel," and well ahead of the two that come between the first and

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on tiny black hats, banked with flowers. Blush pink, or vivid American beauty red, or exquisite ciel blue . . . a lovely flash of color above rich dark furs. 19.75 third floor

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last. There are unmistakable signs in this book of Wolfe's growing up. To be sure, the prose is still attenuated, although not nearly so much as in "Of Time and the River" and "The Web and the Rock"; but there is a capacity for thought here and even some thinking, however misty and amorphous it may often be.

Wolfe shows in this book a social awareness which the earlier ones largely lacked. He caricatures the rich and the pompous and rails at the leftist intelligentsia with a fine scorn. Indeed, a large share of the book is just straight commentary and criticism on his times and their people. This hardly makes for a novel, but it is all interesting and often accurate and penetrating.

Although Wolfe was the absolute master of a fine, flowing, rhythmical (though hardly subtle) prose, he had many flaws, and some of them were rather serious in a writer of his supposed dimension. There are very few who can describe physical action well—only Hemingway, Kenneth Roberts and George Weller come to mind—and Wolfe was not one of them. He could describe well a continued and sustained relationship, but as he grew older he seemed to lose the ability to describe the breaks that occur in people's lives. He tells what happened before and after George Webber's (Thomas Wolfe's) breaks with his Jewish mistress in New York, with his publisher, with his German mistress in Berlin, but he never accurately tells the reasons therefore, and he never describes the moment of severance, the apex of the situation. He never even tries to here, avoiding these situations that call for a high degree of subtle skill in a writer, as so many of the bright young writers today—Farrell, Halper, Prokosch, even Morley Callaghan—avoid or fake writing of physical action; because it is a difficult thing to do and they are not sure that they can do it.

Unlike his last two books, though, this one is distinctly readable, as much for the added light it throws on his perhaps great first book as for anything else. His genius is drawn thin in this book as in all his others but the first. That first, we think, is all that will last, if anything of his does. There was a freshness on it, a great morning of the senses. It lacked intellectual values and it is not too much to say that if we lived in a world that also lacked those values, "Look Homeward, Angel" would be that world's greatest book. Not living—thank God—in such a world, it still remains a powerful and even an awesome phenomenon. The first reading of it is shocking as the discovery of a world with new colors, new sights and heightened sensations would be shocking. He asked, as I remember it, that if one fine person were found, "will not dead faith revive, will we not see God again, as once in morning on the mountain?"

Apparently he found that person—even though it may have been only the editor of a publishing house, a lowly office indeed. For this is what Wolfe wrote to end his final book:

> "Something has spoken to me in the night, burning the tapers of the waning year; something has spoken in the night and told me I shall die, I know not where. Saying:
> "To lose the earth you know, for greater knowing; to lose the life you have, for greater life; to leave the friends you loved, for greater loving; to find a land more kind than home, more large than earth—
> "—Whereon the pillars of this earth are founded, toward which the conscience of the world is tending—a wind is rising, and the rivers flow."

HARRY SYLVESTER.

HISTORY

The Triumph of American Capitalism. Louis M. Hacker. S. & S. $3.00.

IT WAS this reviewer's impression that Professor Hacker's book represented an afterthought. The last chapter is a glowing tribute to capitalism, specifically state capitalism—characterized by him as a "New Beginning (?)" (The question mark is his). In the final paragraph of the book, the author presents his credo: "State capitalism . . . is here to stay—and we shall use it as a servant and not as a sovereign—and I firmly believe it will make us economically secure and keep us politically free." Such a glowing tribute and such optimistic anticipation came as a complete surprise to this reviewer. Neither seemed to have any warrant in the preceding chapters, describing the historical evolution of capitalism in the United States.

Speculation concerning a writer's state of mind is always hazardous. Yet, it is difficult to down the suspicion that Professor Hacker lost his historical, economic and philosophical sense in the latter stages of his work—a result, perhaps, of hysteria induced by war and totalitarianism abroad.

The book is an economic history of the United States. More particularly, since it omits many of the most important factors in the economic development of the country, it is an attempt to interpret the influence of the evolving institutional systems of the country upon its political and economic development. The period covered is a lengthy one, and the treatment, therefore, necessarily somewhat superficial, considering the limited size of the book. The publisher's frontispiece is somewhat misleading, in stating "It is not a record of dates, battles and political campaigns . . . It is wholly concerned with the underlying forces, economic and political, that have made American history." The author, on the contrary, makes numerous and, in this reviewer's opinion, wholly unnecessary excursions into the details of American history.

Specifically, the author pronounces capitalism in the United States a success. He notes the hardships that have been the recurrent lot of the wage-earning group, but they appear to him to have been relatively unimportant. He has a bias in favor of the lower petty bourgeoisie and a profound admiration for the successful man of business, however unsavory his methods, albeit a grave distrust of the gentlemen of high finance, who apparently have lacked the inspiration of the Calvinist creed. Capitalism has had its faults, but its merits far outweigh the minor blots that have marred its escutcheon. It has created or at least nurtured an "idea," a "tradition"—a group of leveling (egalitarian) notions—and to the question: "Is any tradition, any idea, strong enough to withstand physical might?" he answers, "Without question; perhaps this has been man's only armor." What are these leveling notions? To quote him, they are "The natural rights of the individual to his life, liberty and the pursuit of his happiness. Representative republican government. The separation of the church and state. The public school. Universal suffrage. A free associational life. Equality before the law. The hatred of a privileged caste. The right to challenge oppressive public authority."

If the reader wishes to be comforted—and misled—he will do well to eschew all but the last chapter and to read that with the understanding of an open (and empty) mind. If he prefers light to a sweet soporific, he will read all but the last two chapters, and he will find a

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good deal of the former and very little of the latter. But even the earlier chapters, in this reviewer's opinion, leave much to be desired. EDWARD L. LYNCH.

To the Finland Station. Edmund Wilson. Harcourt. $4.00.
From Marx to Stalin. James Edward LeRossignol. Crowell Co. $3.00.

IN OUR DAYS we see the triumph of Marxism and (as it seems at least to this reviewer) the beginning of its decline. Therefore practically no subject could be more up to date than a penetrating analysis and criticism of this intellectual movement.

When Lenin reached the Petersburg terminal, where the trains from Finland come in, and started to prepare for the Marxist revolution, the doctrinary period of this movement was ended. Mr. Wilson in his colorful book traces Marxism just up to this decisive moment; therefore the "cryptic" title of his book, which lets the public expect a novel instead of a collection of historical essays.

The first sixty-five pages of Wilson's book are concerned with the conception of history by modern thinkers from the renaissance philosopher Vico to Renan, Taine and Anatole France. In Vico's work we find the new secularized conception of the social world as nothing but the work of men and therefore to be rationally understood by the principles of the human intelligence itself. Here is the origin of the eighteenth century historical rationalism, which declined into scepticism in the "bourgeois" literature of the nineteenth century.

The next fifty pages of Wilson's book are devoted to the utopian socialists. But the compact rest of the book, about 370 pages, deals exclusively with Marx, his friends, contemporaries and his most important followers.

Wilson does not offer, as you would expect from the subtitle of his book, a thorough analysis of the Marxist philosophy of history. He is much more interested in the personal characters of Marx, Engels, Bakunin, Lasalle, Lenin and Trotzky and even their family backgrounds.

Marx's "Capital" has been an influential book as a "Bible," promising to humanity true redemption from its sufferings, signaling the imperfections of our earthly existence. Here is, in fact, a pseudo-revelation, in strictly sociological definition, a "corpus mysticum," to which all those belong who suffer materially or psychologically by the domination of the capitalistic system. After the expropriation of the capitalists—which is supposed to be the way to redemption—proletariat and mankind will be synonymous.

It is in view of this element in Marxist thought that Wilson enthusiastically approves Marx's self-appreciation of the "Capital" as a "work of art." He considers Marx not only a great philosopher but also a master of criticism and satire, "The greatest ironist since Swift." But even if we admit a certain poetical trend in Marx's expression of enthusiasm and disapproval, to us Marx's work has nothing to do with poetical *fiction,* it is, as a matter of fact, a work of materialistic *theology,* turning the concrete social processes into metaphysical developments inside an alleged "progress" of social life by mechanization. Instead of freeing, as he believed, mankind "from the opium of religion," Marx pushed economic studies for nearly a century into the opium of arbitrary (theological) abstractions.

It seems to this reviewer, that Christopher Dawson and Waldemar Gurian, more than a decade ago presented

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a much deeper interpretation of Marxism. But by bringing into a secularized and sceptical world the crude dogmas of his economic theology, Marx inspired the Occidental World with the new vitality of a pseudo-religious faith.

Though Wilson stops halfway to this insight, he gives a clever and very readable understanding of many minor problems involved. Young Trotzky is treated *con amore* for the burning heat of his political faith, and a combination of realistic observation and beautiful imagination in his writings. It is not without irony that Wilson quotes Trotzky's malicious words about those "pitiful isolated individuals," who missed the road to success and end in "the rubbish-can of history." It reads like a bitter necrologue of his own. In the materialistic narrowness of Marxism there is no room for individual heroism, for the valuation of personal resistance against victorious errors.

LeRossignol discusses the problems of Marxism not in Wilson's historical way, but with a more abstract and up-to-date interpretation. He is not as brilliant a writer as is Wilson. It is characteristic that in LeRossignol's large bibliography we find only works written in English and mostly books published in recent years. His assiduous work lacks a deeper historical background and a philosophy of his own. LeRossignol's approach to his topic is opportunistic enough. The answer to the rights and wrongs of Marxism is, as the author trivially puts it, "in the lap of the gods." LeRossignol admires the "vitriolic eloquence" of Marx and Engels, without deciding whether it is "an expression of righteous wrath" or "a malevolent diatribe." He takes the Marxist ideas very seriously, but he nevertheless hopes "that the depression will pass, and that it will be succeeded by another period of prosperity and good feeling." He does not condemn the aims of Marxism, but he condemns the fanaticism of visionaries and demagogues and hopes that instead, little by little, the present order might be improved.

This all is admirable practical common sense. But certainly it is not a very definitive philosophical standpoint, from which a "critique" of Marxism might gain essential and original points of view. Though LeRossignol's four hundred pages furnish the reader with abundant quotations from the Marxist literature, the reader finishes the book without a definitive vision of what Marxism really means to us and future generations. In this voluminous book we miss any serious discussion of how Marxism will influence the freedom of the individual, how it will accommodate itself with the values of family and nation or with the intellectual and artistic traditions.

C. O. CLEVELAND.

SCIENCE

Catholicism and the Progress of Science. William M. Agar. Macmillan. $1.00.

THE alleged conflict between the Catholic Church and science has done and is, I believe, still doing a considerable damage to souls. First, it is used as an impeachment of the Church by its enemies, an impeachment which makes a great impression on non-Catholics, and which is accepted almost as an axiom. Secondly, it has troubled many young Catholics, even to the loss of faith. Thirdly, it may be partly responsible for the dearth of Catholic scientists. In view of this, the present work, written from the Catholic standpoint by a scientist who knows what he is talking about, can be especially recom-

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mended. It is short, readable, thoroughly reliable, and distinguished by its balanced judgment. One is tempted to quote many passages. We have chosen several from the section on modern science and religious controversy. "When modern science began to develop, the real struggle was between the old science based on the authority of Aristotle and Ptolemy, and the new science based on observation. . . . It grew out of the very human fact . . . that it is terribly hard to accept new truths when they demand complete readjustment of processes of thought." "Shortly after . . . the conflict represented a divergence between those who considered the word of God and man's relation to God as the most important thing and those who regarded human knowledge as self-sufficient." "Scientists have frequently reached conclusions inimical to Christianity in matters far beyond the bounds dictated by science. Theologians on their part . . . have sought safety in denying what was afterwards proved to be true."

The first chapter, on the early history of science, describes the start of rational science among the Greeks, and its fate in Western Europe up to the renaissance. Agar calls attention to the fact that the flow of ideas from the East brought with it many magical beliefs, which became very difficult to eradicate. Other matters treated in this section are the caution of the early Fathers, who avoided drawing literal scientific conclusions from the Scriptures; the continuing regard for medical science, regardless of the breakdown of the Roman Empire; and Roger Bacon's emphasis on observation which presupposes similar widespread views. Scholastic philosophy declined after the fourteenth century, and when the new problems arose, it was too weak to ingest them. The emphasis it placed, however, on order and law and its training of the mind to logical thinking made the later development of science possible.

The next chapters are concerned with particular controversies. In the second chapter geographical and astronomical problems are dealt with and clarified. For example, while the masses of the people believed the earth to be flat, the learned men of antiquity as well as those of medieval Christianity regarded the earth as a sphere. The problem discussed then was whether man existed at the Antipodes because it seemed hard to see how he could have gotten there. It is pointed out that in the dispute over Galileo, the decision was in no way an infallible one. Saint Bellarmine, one of the members of the tribunal, even considered the possibility that a change might become necessary in the interpretation of the Scriptural passage concerned.

The third chapter treats of the history of the interpretation of fossils and of the flood. There was no reason to dispute the literal interpretation of Genesis until the slowly developing science of geology showed that it was in contradiction with the facts. One of the founders of modern geology was Nicholaus Stensen (1638-1687), a Danish convert, who died as Vicar Apostolic of the Northern Missions.

One of the most persistent accusations against the Church has been that in the middle ages it prohibited anatomical dissection. This is shown to be a fable which perhaps got its start in the decree of Bonifiace III forbidding certain methods of preparing for shipment home the bodies of crusaders who had died in Palestine.

The fourth and fifth chapters are mainly concerned with organic evolution. The history of evolution shows

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that a somewhat similar idea was familiar to the Fathers. Paradoxically, however, what the science of the times looked upon as evidence, and particularly the later scientific systematization of plants and animals, led to its abandonment. One of the difficulties was that the philosophical notion of species, to which the scholastics ascribed immutability, was gratuitously identified with the same term as used by the naturalists.

Since Darwin's time an increasing number of facts are accumulating in many fields which can be explained by evolution. It is this convergence from many directions which most scientists regard as the strongest proof. Such facts come from domestication with the resultant changes, from comparative anatomy, embryology, and blood chemistry, from paleontology and from distribution. Unfortunately certain scientists have tried to use evolution to uphold materialism, but that is no justification for rejecting evolution itself. There is still disagreement as to the manner in which evolution has come about, but this is a scientific, not a religious, question.

In his conclusion Agar makes a plea, to which the reviewer heartily subscribes, for the critically needed increase in the ranks of Catholic scientists as part of Catholic action. "Christianity has been fighting a rearguard action for too long." KARL F. HERZFELD.

POETRY

Weep and Prepare. Selected Poems 1926-1939. *Raymond E. F. Larsson. Coward-McCann.* $2.50

WHEN MR. LARSSON'S first book of verse appeared, many kind things were said of it; and the remark I particularly remember was Padraic Colum's, who commented on this poet's feeling for design. Several of the poems in that volume are reprinted in this. The reader may be baffled by some of them, sensing little relationship with the tradition of English song. But if he will note just one thing—the pictorial art of Mr. Larsson—and will then compare this with what he recalls of Spenser, Dryden, Collins and Keats, he will (I think) begin to see wherein this poet is modern and wherein traditional. It is true of Larsson that he has relatively little intellectual substance. He may have a cadence, an image, that suggests Donne or Cowley, but he has none of their "wit." One might almost say of him that he does not think at all—that the ideas he does offer are either too conventional to be of value, or too glaringly modernistic to be of interest. This is a fault, and I do not wish to condone it. Certainly the poet has need of hard, positive ratiocination. What Mr. Larsson does afford is spiritualized feeling of great poignancy and significance. It may be that the patterns of his emotion are sometimes elusive or involute; but they are drawn on a background of signicant and noble experience. And when you find that he has the gift for giving those patterns a very arresting pictorial character, you realize that Larsson both expresses the present and transcends it.

Thus, if one goes from a segment of an older poem which begins,

> Bruges:
> I leave
> tomorrow,

with its haunting evocation of a perishing medievalism to a very remarkable new poem, "Ah, Who Would Mourn?," one follows a trajectory of the sensitive, realizing soul, one has a sudden sense of having found someone who has *felt* the relationship between beauty-in-death

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and beauty-in-life about as keenly as it has been felt in verse. This is a poem written "For Saint Mary Magdalen"; and one thinks it a not unworthy offering since, like the Anglo-Saxon "Dream of the Rood," is a dirge for the Saviour of a beautifully reverent religious clarity.

Larsson professes to have become a Catholic poet. It is a Catholicism for which he has suffered much and will suffer more. As a matter of fact these poems speak, to anybody who will take the trouble to understand them, of the bleeding feet and the stones of pilgrimage. The poet has a great affection for the stars and the sea, but it is the love of one who knows them as good things he will never know. Their rhythm is in his verse, but it has become the rhythm of renouncement. Go gently when you meet a poet like this. For he will be remembered.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

In The Groove

THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE for Music Appreciation—the organization which has sold cheap recordings of symphonies in numerous cities—is now launching a series of operatic excerpts, at $1.75 for a set of three or four discs (albums extra). These sets are called condensed operas, although it is obviously impossible to condense an opera that much; that is, to capture its essential quality while reducing its size as much as eighty per-cent, or to convey a feeling of the dramatic plot which, unfortunately in some cases, every opera has. The Committee's condescending advertisements, its air of doing the public some prodigious favor and its participation in an unwarranted though widespread bowing and scraping before the institution of opera will undoubtedly infuriate a great many people. But the records are all right. Their anonymous performers seem to include some Metropolitan Opera singers. Of those which I have played, *Carmen, Aïda* and *Faust,* the last suffers most from the condensing process.

Like many other composers, Igor Stravinsky has often been judged an incompetent conductor of his own works. But for Columbia he has made a thumping, pulsing record of his *Sacre du Printemps* ("Rite of Spring") with the New York Philharmonic Symphony (album 417, $4.50). Beautifully recorded, this set of ritual dances of pagan Russia need no longer alarm listeners, as it did at its first performance nearly thirty years ago; it is now a symphonic classic. Among the classics of the month (in the truer sense of the word) the best is Bach's *D Minor Concerto,* commonly played as a piano work but now reconstructed for the violin, as in its original—though lost—form. A noble work, it is nobly played by Joseph Szigeti, with a rather coarse accompaniment by the New Friends of Music Orchestra (Columbia album 418, $3.50). Bach's *Little Organ Book,* containing organ chorale preludes for most of the Sundays of the church year, was begun last spring with an album by E. Power Biggs on the limpid-toned organ of the Germanic Museum in Cambridge, Mass. It is continued with Volume II, again well played, comprising preludes from Whitsunday through part of Advent (Victor album 697, $4). Victor's roundabout method of releasing these beautiful little organ pieces—for seasonal interest—will prevent buyers from arranging them in proper order until Volume III is issued.

One of the most eloquent of contemporary works is Ernest Bloch's *Schelomo* (*Hebrew Rhapsody*) for cello

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and orchestra. It is Solomon, meditating bitterly, even feverishly, on worldly vanities. In its first recording, Emanuel Feuermann plays the difficult cello part with great eloquence, to an accompaniment in which the fevers are emphasized, by Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra (Victor album 698, $3). Stokowski and his All American Youth Orchestra, which now is disbanded indefinitely, play Ravel's *Bolero* with tonal fullness, but considerable hurry, for Columbia (album X-174, $2). Mendelssohn's *Symphony No. 3 (Scotch)* an ingratiating, burbling work, receives expert treatment at the hands of a new Victor group, the Rochester Philharmonic under Jose Iturbi (album 699, $4.50).

A wealth of Haydn string quartets, none hitherto recorded, is contained in Volume VII of Victor's monumental "Haydn Society" series, and completes it; for through a curious mistake Volume VIII was issued last year. The Pro Arte Quartet plays them (album 689, $7.50), and like any quartet records they are excellent—especially if you have an automatic phonograph—for late-night playing when the neighbors must not be bothered. For fanciers of the romantic, the delicate, Weber's *Piano Sonata No. 2* is recommended, a first recording beautifully done by Alfred Cortot (Victor album 703, $3.50). Best single disc of the month, in my opinion, is that on which Helen Traubel, new American soprano, makes her début and displays a thrilling voice, in *Dich Teure Halle* from *Tannhauser* and *Divinités du Styx* from Gluck's *Alceste* (Victor). Also recommended: the dark-hued, otherworldly *Swan of Tuonela* of Sibelius, played by Frederick Stock and the Chicago Symphony (Columbia), and another début, Suzanne Sten, rich-voiced Czech mezzo-soprano, in two Strauss lieder, *Heimkehr* and *Cäcilie* (Columbia).

Among the popular albums, once more Decca provides the most interesting. Silky-voiced, mononymous Hildegarde sings fetching songs by Vernon Duke (Vladimir Dukelsky). One of the better pianists, Count Basie, plays blues, boogie-woogie and simple jazz in a five-disc Decca album. Some of the more rhythmic and tuneful works of the Spaniard Isaac Albeniz are played on four discs by Harry Horlick and the Decca Symphony. One of Harlem's greatest jazz men, the late Chick Webb, is honored with a "memorial album" in which his virtuoso drumming is to be heard.

If you like jazz with less noise, more of the simple spirit of oldtime jazz, watch for recordings by Wingy Mannone and Erskine Butterfield. Both of these musicians have small bands, and play as if they enjoyed their work. Compare, for instance, Wingy's *Rhythm on the River* (Bluebird) with the numerous other current records of the same piece. Butterfield's current contribution is *Pushin' the Conversation Along* (Decca). Chicago-style jazz is well represented on the lists by Jimmy MacPartland's *Eccentric*, backed by *Panama*. Also for jazz-fans: *Ain't Misbehavin'* by Sidney Bechet and his New Orleans Footwarmers (Victor); *Zooming at the Zombie* by John Kirby (Okeh); *Honeysuckle Rose* by Coleman Hawkins (Decca); *The Dixieland Band* by Benny Goodman (Columbia); *Fats Waller's E Flat Blues* by the guttural Mr. W. (Bluebird). Vocals of the month: Ella Logan's *Whiffenpoof Song* (Columbia); Virginia O'Brien's *I'm An Old Jitterbug* (Columbia); *Moonlight Bay* by the Mills Brothers (Decca). For dancing: *Exactly Like You* and *You're Driving Me Crazy*, by the organization whose name is my candidate for tops, the Quintet of the Hot Club of France (Victor).

C. J. BALLIETT, JR.

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Next Week — The Election

Editors and contributors to The Commonweal have been engaged for some weeks in preparing an issue devoted entirely to the 1940 presidential election. It will be ready next week. Features include **FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT,** by C. G. Paulding and **WENDELL L. WILLKIE,** by Philip Burnham, two spirited and contrasting views on the two leading candidates. An informative article, **THE ELECTION AND THE CATHOLIC PRESS,** will be contributed by Edward Skillin, Jr.

The theme of the whole issue will be forcibly expressed in the editorials; the existence of marked and healthy differences among Catholics on political matters and the liberty of the individual Catholic to act in this matter in accordance with his sincere knowledge and belief.

Grenville Vernon, The Commonweal's play reviewer, will devote his column next week to the revival of dramatic expression in both actors and political leaders. Philip Hartung will discuss the relationship of the motion picture industry to politics, that industry's political inhibitions, fears and displays of caution, intelligent, etc.

To throw further light on the climax of the campaign, the following books will also be revealingly and entertainingly reviewed:

John T. Flynn, "Country Squire in the White House"
Charles Hurd, "The White House"
Matthew Josephson, "The President Makers"
Samuel Pettengill, "Smoke Screen"
Eleanor Roosevelt, "The Moral Basis of Democracy"
Henry A. Wallace, "The American Choice"

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The Inner Forum

IN ADDITION to American Catholic book publishers and the general book publishers that bring out Catholic books there are several organizations founded to guide the reading of their subscribers. The Catholic Book Club selects one volume of general interest each month—fiction, biography, belles lettres, etc. A similar service in the religious field is performed by the Spiritual Book Associates (lives of the saints, theology, books for spiritual reading). The Pro Parvulis Book Club recommends six books a year in each of the following categories: boys and girls in lower grades; boys in grammar school and early high school; girls in grammar school and early high school; juniors and seniors in high school. These organizations also publish bulletins of various kinds to provide further information on books of the day.

Besides the textbooks which comprise various series for school and college a number of publishers issue series for popular reading such as Macmillan's current "Christendom" series. Two of the Catholic publishers have book clubs of their own. The Sheed and Ward Book Society sends its subscribers 10 Sheed and Ward books each year. The Bruce Publishing Company of Milwaukee has the Science and Culture Foundation in which subscribers agree to take 6 "Science and Culture" books annually.

Catholic magazines publish regular pages of book reviews. Many of the diocesan newspapers carry columns of recommendations, in some instances provided by literary clubs or special literary committees. In New York the Cardinal Hayes Literature Committee publishes a quarterly pamphlet of recommended titles.

CONTRIBUTORS

Emmanuel MOUNIER is a French editor and author of "A Personalist Manifesto." He has also produced penetrating works on property, problems arising from pacificism and the personalist and communitarian revolution.

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